Week ending May 10 1952
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

"PRETEND YOU'RE A HERO"

A great complete story by Charles Jackson, author of "The Lost Weekend"

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"In fact, I'm *always* tired! I simply dread having to stand about like this."

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"Is *that* why you are both so full of life and energy! My trouble is that I am not only always tired but I get so irritable and nervy."

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"What has Phyllosan done to you, then?"

"*It has strengthened my nerves, sharpened my appetite, improved my digestion, given me more energy and an altogether brighter outlook on life. You should try it.*"

"I certainly will. I'd like to feel—and look—as well and happy as you do."

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by restoring digestive and metabolic tone

strengthening the nerves and increasing energy

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Private lives

ANNOUNCING HIS DECISION not to seek re-election as M.P. for Hitchin, Mr. Nigel Fisher said: "When my divorce came on I thought it right to offer my resignation. I have not a big majority and I think this would make it very tight indeed. Nor did I want to run the risk of criticism afterwards that they would have managed if 'Our M.P. had not been through the Divorce Court.'"

Mr. Fisher knows his own business best and nobody is entitled to question the decision he has made. He intends to try for a safer seat where the possibility of losing votes because he has been divorced by his wife will not matter so much.

BUT what needs challenging is the state of affairs which led Mr. Fisher to make his decision. It seems almost like an echo from Victorian days.

Then, the most sensational divorce case was that in which Parnell, the famous Irish leader, was cited as co-respondent. The scandal was enough to drive Parnell from public life.

Certainly it is a sound instinct which leads the British people to look for a happy home life among those they elect as their rulers. A man or woman who has a contented family life is much more likely to take a balanced view of the difficult problems which assail us all than someone who has not.

WE are all liable to make mistakes, however, and our legislators would be less than human if they did not make theirs.

Often it is better to end an unfortunate marriage by divorce than to continue a situation in which both parties would only make each other miserable for the rest of their lives.

Automatically to penalize people who have been through the divorce courts is unfair. Yet that is what has happened to Mr. Fisher.

As a shrewd politician, he knows there are solid grounds for thinking that his divorce has stirred up sufficient disapproval to destroy the chance of holding his present seat at the next election.

THERE are 11,000,000 married couples in England and Wales today. There are also 750,000 people who have been divorced (not all of whom, of course, were the "guilty party," as it is called). In the four years from 1947 to 1950 alone, more than 300,000 people were divorced.

These figures show that divorce is no longer regarded by society as particularly wicked or peculiar, as it was in our grandparents' time. They prove that it is out of date to attach a stigma to a divorced person.

We in Britain have moved away from the idea of damning out of hand a man or a woman who has been in a divorce court.

IN the reign of George VI invitations to Royal functions were received by those who had been divorced, provided that they were *technically* the innocent party. In the reign of Elizabeth II it may well be that the Royal disapproval will be lifted from both parties to a divorce action, particularly as more than one member of the present Government has been divorced by his wife.

As a civilized nation we ought not to mete out stronger punishment than the law provides to people we think have acted wrongly, however much we disapprove of them.

THE law of the land is a reflection of what the community as a whole has come to think is right and proper. And over the last twenty years the law has recognized that in modern conditions it should be easier to get a divorce than it was of old.

It is not for us to treat those who have been legally divorced, often after great personal distress and strain, as social "outcasts."

THIS WEEK'S COVER

"OH, my nylons!" The horror-struck girl in William Showell's painting is his pretty young daughter, Avril. Pictured with her is the family spaniel—the too-helpful "Pooch." Avril, an artist herself, often poses for her father. So does her brother Russell, a writer, and her sister Jill, an actress playing in the current Shakespeare season at Stratford. With so much talent about, life is rarely dull in Showell's home.

Said a germ with a permanent pout,
"That pine scent's delightful, no doubt;
But to germs it's a warning
To go into mourning,
For JEYPINE means millions wiped out".

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MR. WALLACE, chief assistant to Mr. H. S. Paul, the well-known hairdresser of Davies Street, London, recently made this candid comment: "With a Pal hollow-ground blade," he said, "customers can give themselves as good a shave as I could—and a lot cheaper." It's true. The secret is in the patented hollow-grinding, *plus* the special Pal multi-stropped edge. That's why Pal Hollow-Ground blades give you wonderfully clean *feather-touch* shaves—and lots of them. Get some today!

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BLADES

Now—a new addition to the Pal range—the new Pal Gold Thin, specially designed for men with tough beards and tender skins. Its super-sharp, flexible edge glides over your face, sweeping your beard away like down. Pal is your best blade buy!

NEW!
GOLD PAL THIN
HOLLOW GROUND

• BLUE HOLLOW-GROUND • SINGLE EDGE • GOLD THIN

There's never been a soap like WRIGHT'S!

IDEAL FOR TOILET, BATH AND NURSERY

Bath size tablet now available again.

Out of the top drawer
Van Heusen
. . . the 'quality' shirt that proves what good materials, sound sewmanship and long life mean in terms of economy.

"Now I sleep the whole night through.."

". . . *Winter and summer I was never free and never knew what a night's sleep was . . . Now I sleep the whole night through and everyone tells me how much better I am looking . . .*" (*Mrs.*) *J. C., Leeds, 8.*

(Original can be inspected)

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FREE SPEECH

The family battle over school-leaving

MY TWO SONS, aged sixteen and eighteen, have excellent school records, but I am adamant that they must leave school at eighteen, instead of going on to a university. In my view, four or five years' practical experience with a good firm will carry them much farther than a university degree.

I believe that most employers want a man with a sound, practical background and that, by starting work at eighteen, my sons will be better off later on than if they had gone to a university. But people tell me that I am wrong, and this is developing into a major domestic issue. I wonder whether, when they reflect in later years, my sons will thank me for the attitude I have adopted or whether they will think of me as the father who refused them their chance in life.—F. C. P., London, W.8.

Fighting The Bush Fire

COLIN PROSSER'S DESCRIPTION of the great Australian bush fire (JOHN BULL, April 19) interested me very much, as one of my sons helped to fight the fire before rain put it out at the end of February. What amazed him was the courage and cheerfulness of the people. It was tragic to see a man's house, outbuildings and cattle destroyed. But to see how everyone worked and helped his neighbour was an inspiration he will not easily forget. —MRS. F. STATHAM, 50 Ernest Street, Rhyl, North Wales.

A Woman On Lawn-mowing

WHY DO MEN so dislike cutting lawns? It is not a difficult job, the surroundings are usually pleasant, the motion is soothing and restful and

the grass always smells so nice. Is it the regularity of the work that annoys them?—MRS. D. N. CLAYDON, 59 Oxford Road, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.

How To Write To Korea

I WONDER WHETHER all those people with sweethearts, sons and husbands in Korea realize how their letters are received out here. Mail arrives three times a week, and you should see the boys' faces light up when they hear there is a letter for them—or drop when they are passed by. Maybe it's because someone has decided to put off until tomorrow that letter which should have been written today; or because it has been written but left on a shelf until someone remembers to post it; or sent with a twopenny-halfpenny stamp, hoping it will be overlooked and go by air mail anyway—it does sometimes, but by sea it takes more than a month. And the news in letters doesn't always help morale. A fiancée breaks off her engagement, after kidding for months about loyalty and true love; a mother writes that she is worried because father is seriously ill—then when his slight cold is better writes to say that he only had a slight cold; people grumble about rations, hardships, weather. Surely most of the bad news could wait a little longer, anyway. It's a thrill for a man to read that his father has got promotion, his daughter has just spoken her first word, his boyhood friend is getting married, or the apple tree has started growing pears. We want to read the scandal, the titbits of news, the funny incidents to make us laugh until we are home again.—CORPORAL, British Army, Korea.

The Happy Shoppers

YOUR CORRESPONDENT who asks ("Free Speech," April 19) when we are going to follow the example of New Zealand, and provide permanent canopies over our shop fronts to protect shoppers from the rain, need only

come to Plymouth, where such canopies already exist, as shown in the enclosed photograph.—A. H. JAQUES, 19 May Terrace, Lipson, Plymouth.

. . . In Lord Street, Southport, you can buy anything, from the rations to an expensive car, all under cover of canopies and arcades.—M. A. GOULDER, 39 Grantham Road, Southport.

. . . For five years I lived in Chester, where the pavements in front of the shops are covered. Dodging along wet streets from shop to shop comes hard after having experienced shopping in comfort.—MRS. L. M. HOOK, 38 Briarwood Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

Fading Art Of Sewing

BUDDING DRESSMAKERS of today have a hard time. When I was ten I was given my first dress length (two yards of gingham at 6½d. a yard). I spread it out to its fullest extent on the floor and was able to brood over it to my heart's content. With a little help and advice, accepted most ungraciously, and the use of a few safety-pins, I achieved my first very gaudy and somewhat shapeless dress. At the same age, my own daughter is losing interest in the scraps of material I can spare for her efforts at sewing, because "they will not make anything."—MRS. E. H. LANE, 5 Tamar Avenue, Shiphay, Torquay.

Shilling-a-day Holiday

LAST YEAR, my cousin and I went camping, starting from London and planning to go to Bath. Actually, we did better than we had planned and reached Cheddar, making the journey in three stages, stopping at Reading, Calne and Farmborough, a village in Somerset. West Country farmers, we found, are quite willing to have tidy campers on their land, and the owner of the field in which we camped at Farmborough charged us nothing and supplied us with free milk. We had a lot of fun and learned many new facts of history and geography in a holiday which lasted ten days and cost 10s.—SCHOOLBOY (aged 12), London, N.4.

A Foreigner At Home

FOR FOURTEEN YEARS I longed to go home to my native Austria. At last I went. I found that I spoke my own language with an accent which classed me as a foreigner. I experienced many emotions, but the strangest was at a theatre when the national anthem was played and I did not recognize it. I do not know how many national anthems they have had since 1937. —WILMA RICE, 11 Riverslea Road, Blundellsands, Liverpool.

In 1937, Austria's national anthem was "Thine Be Never-Ending Blessings." The tune: Haydn's "Emperor's Hymn." In 1938, after the Nazis marched in, it was "Deutschland Uber Alles"—with the same tune. Since the war it has been changed again to "Land of Mountains, Land of Rivers," with music by Mozart.

Spiritual Or Psychic?

REGINALD M. LESTER'S articles, "Survival After Death" (JOHN BULL, March 22-April 26) have no doubt been read with great interest. Unless belief in the reality of life after death be regarded as a baseless superstition, the denial of the possibility of the communion of spirits seems a one-sided attitude. However, for many of us, whether we are Christians or Jews, acceptance of this possibility is simply forbidden. Our fellowship with the departed should be spiritual and not psychic—through Christ, who makes us all one, and not through a strange and unknown medium.—CLERGYMAN, Wales.

. . . Survival after death has been proved to me many times by the presence of loved ones who have passed over. Why is it that, in spirit form, they appear to mediums in the clothes they wore when in this world?—MRS. IRENE KING, 585 Lichfield Road, Four Oaks, Birmingham.

Reginald M. Lester is preparing a further article, answering many of the questions raised by readers. It will appear in JOHN BULL *shortly.*

Teaching Them Young

WHENEVER I am out with my two small children, I encourage them to show me across the road, telling me when it is safe to cross. If they are made to think for themselves, they will learn more quickly how to avoid the mistakes which lead to accidents. —R. HUGHES, 35 Cedar Avenue, Lowton, Warrington, Lancs.

Dangerous Good Looks

OFTEN we seem to make too many sacrifices to appearances. Highly polished floors look very nice but they can be definitely dangerous. Yet we find them, and slip on them, in museums, art galleries and—worst of all—hospitals. Must we continue to make ice rinks out of our floors?—E. G. HALL, 18 Parkhurst Road, Bexhill, Sussex.

A Robot Goes Shopping

HAVING BEEN A SHOP ASSISTANT myself, I would rather serve ten women than one man. In most cases, the male shopper is a robot, only doing his wife's bidding, a mechanical doll who has been wound up by some astute female before setting out. Probably the goods he purchases will be back on the counter within a few days, this time accompanied by the master-mind, requesting an exchange. Men shoppers are misfits, lifeless and joyless. Give me women every time, with their gaiety, frivolity and bits of gossip.—MRS. L. E. WILLIAMS, 47 Charles Street, Tonypandy.

Letters intended for publication should be marked "Free Speech" and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Which Twin has the Toni —

and which has the expensive perm?

(See answer below)

Hairstyles by a famous coiffeur

Why Toni is still the overwhelming favourite among all home perms

Proved by millions

Millions of satisfied users know that tried and proved Toni gives a permanent wave that means all day — every day loveliness for you, month after month.

Looks so natural

Toni gives you a permanent wave that looks and acts immediately like naturally curly hair. No wonder more women in Britain use Toni than all other home perms combined.

Twice as easy

Toni's patented SPIN Curlers make winding twice as easy, so much faster. Grip — spin — lock with a flick of your finger. Up goes your hair in a perfect curl!

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Toni's wonderful Creme Lotion gently coaxes your hair into silky-soft waves and curls. Your hair looks lovelier — your wave lasts longer, much longer!

Which Twin has the Toni? Compare Alva Anderson's Toni (on the right) with her sister Alice's expensive perm and you'll agree that even the most expensive perm can't surpass the natural beauty of a Toni — *for a fraction of the cost.*

Whole Head Refill **9/-**

If you have no curlers, buy the Whole Head Kit with Spin Curlers — **18/6**, or with Standard Curlers—**15/-**. End Curl Kit with Midget Spin Curlers — **9/-**. End Curl Refill — **6/6**.

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Home Perm

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Tops them all for fruitiness

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Each glistening sweet is neatly wrapped and the gay, red and yellow packet just naturally fits into your pocket or handbag.

What better value could you get for *one* point than Spangles . . . the wonderful new sweets with the rich fruity flavours!

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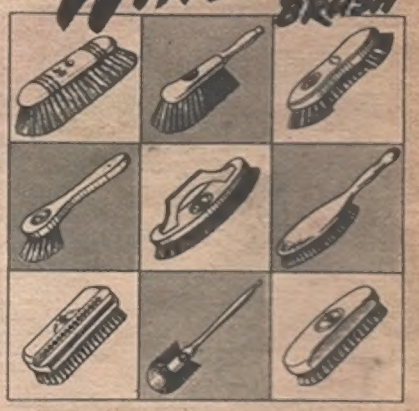

Even without the familiar 'Windmill' mark, you'd always know a genuine WINDMILL brush! Humble stove brush to handsome broom-head, it's better made throughout—yet costs no more! Ask by name for WINDMILL. Whatever the household task there's always a WINDMILL brush to do it quicker!

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FLAG TOMATO KETCHUP is delicious too!

The author of "The Lost Weekend" writes a brilliant new story

PRETEND YOU'RE A HERO

by ***CHARLES JACKSON***

THE NEWS OF THE ESCAPE first got around on Sunday night. It threw the eldest son into a state of agitation, almost panic, possibly because he was old enough to know what it meant. The youngest was indifferent: he was too young. The reaction of Don Birnam, the middle son, was romantic: what a pity it had happened forty miles away, and thus the consequent exciting danger of threat would never reach as far as their town of Arcadia. He was twelve at the time.

There had been a break at the state prison in Auburn. Six convicts had shot their way out and were now—so everybody said—terrorizing the countryside, though no one had seen a sign of them since their rush to freedom, after a wounded guard, at gun-point, had raised the outer gate for their escape.

The news came to the Birnams from one of their neighbours over the telephone. The thing to do, people said then, was to stay close to home, go out as little as possible, keep off the streets after dark, lock up at night, and, more than anything else, avoid the open country.

For the next few days they observed these pleasant restrictions—and for Don it was exciting, going to school mornings and coming home again after school, to think that maybe an escaped convict or two might very possibly be watching his progress along the familiar streets while he kept his face straight ahead, pretending he did not know that furtive eyes spied on him through the horizontal slats of the cupola on top of Mr. Newton's stable or the vertical slats underneath Mrs. van Benschoten's broad piazza.

BUT within a few days the excitement had subsided; people began to forget it, and, on the following Saturday, Don made the usual preparations for his regular Saturday afternoon hike into the country.

This hike had become as regular a part of his week as the Saturday night bath or Sunday school on Sunday morning. From Monday to Friday, during school hours, Don Birnam dreamed about it over his history or algebra book, planning what he would take along and the things he would do, mostly planning what rôle he would play this time. He always went alone, of course; only alone could he fully realize the characters of the heroes of history and the picture strips.

South and east of Arcadia the countryside was dotted with occasional farms and cultivated fields and open pastures, but once he had started out, it immediately became unexplored country, enemy country. The farms were lone outposts, the familiar brook was an upper reach of the Mississippi, the single-track railroad was the path of the Iron Horse that had been laid across the Western plains, the horses that grazed in the pastures were mustangs and the cows bison.

He stowed the peanut-butter sandwiches in his knapsack, slung it on his back, hollered goodbye to his mother, and cut across the back lots towards Indian territory.

The railroad, raised slightly above the rolling fields, stretched in a straight line for more than a mile across the countryside that he knew so well, till it disappeared around a bend in the distance. He used to stand between the tracks and watch how the rails met and merged together far up ahead, like an immensely long, tapering ladder laid flat, and how, if it was a

As the train drew up, Mr. Colvin leaned out of the driver's cabin. "Now look here, boy," he said sternly. "What do you think you're up to?"

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

warm day, the rails blurred and shimmered in the heat waves that played over the road-bed.

But best of all was when a train came along, taking shape and sound from out of the distance, growing bigger and louder, till, after he had hurried down the bank and climbed on the fence to wave at the driver, it rumbled slowly past with a hiss of steam, a terrible grinding of rods and monstrous wheels, and then the long rattle and clatter of the twenty or thirty freight cars that wobbled along behind.

Don knew the driver. It was Mr. Colvin, who lived a few doors from the Birnams, and his daily run, the only train of the afternoon, was from Binghampton in the southern part of the state to Parsons Point on Lake Ontario. And one day when Mr. Colvin saw him sitting there on the fence, waiting to wave at him, he slowed the train down and brought it to a hissing, shuddering stop. It was easily the high point of Don's life. Mr. Colvin hollered from the cab: "Hi, boy! Want to ride into town?" Don jumped down from the fence and clambered up the steep bank; Mr. Colvin leaned out to give him a hand, and Don climbed in.

It was hot and smelly inside, and wonderful. Mr. Colvin said to watch out for all the grease and coal dust; he didn't want to have Don's mother get after him. But Don didn't care. He gave the driver one of his peanut-butter sandwiches, took one himself, and the two of them rode on into Arcadia, where Don climbed down at the station, to the astonishment of Mr. Brink, the stationmaster, and the envy of his friends at school when they heard about it later. Ever since then, he had wanted Mr. Colvin to pick him up again. He knew he had only to ask or to signal to him, but somehow Don never did.

ABOUT a mile along the embankment there was a culvert that ran under the railroad, carrying through it a shallow little stream if it was spring-time, the barest trickle if it was summer. The culvert was a round tile pipe, so big that he could stand upright in it if he took off his scout hat. It was one of Don's favourite places along his weekly hike. He always climbed down the bank here and walked through. It was fun to shatter the silence by suddenly giving a great shout; his ears rang as the curving tile walls magnified the shout and sent its reverberations back and forth along the tunnel, and a mighty sound like a thunderclap could be produced by taking two rocks and banging them hard together.

Before scrambling down to go through the culvert, Don stood on the high embankment and surveyed the countryside—a last look around to see that all was well. Scout-fashion, he shaded his eyes with his hand. The landscape was as quiet and serene as ever—deceptively so, he told himself with satisfaction, for he knew that the old dangers lurked as usual where he least, and at the same time most, expected them. This was as it should be; and he took pleasure in the certain knowledge that if he should turn aside his glance for even a second, an ambush would collect in the grove of beeches half a mile away or an Indian head-dress would suddenly move forward in the tall grasses. With a show of nonchalance, for the benefit of any watching spy, he descended the bank and turned to go through the culvert.

As he left the bright sunlight behind and moved forward into the dark, Don wondered what he'd find inside this time; the culvert always yielded a surprise or two, showing that others besides himself knew of and used his hideaway. Once it had been a dead cat, and for a couple of weeks thereafter he had had to avoid the place; once he found a tobacco pouch, half full. Stepping from stone to flat stone, his eyes on the damp silt or peering into the tiny shallows beneath his feet, he moved slowly forward in a crouching position towards the vivid, round window at the other end of the culvert. Suddenly he realized that he was not alone. Midway between the two openings, a man sat watching his approach. His knees were up to his chin, his hands clasped around his legs, as if he were merely resting there idly; but at the same instant, Don got the impression that he was intensely alert.

Very slowly, very cautiously, the man stretched out a hand towards the sandwiches. As he moved,

The man gazed at him intently; and for what may have been half a minute, Don gazed back. The man did not speak; neither did Don.

DURING that first long, silent moment he knew that he had run into one of the convicts. He knew, too, somehow, that he must not let on that he knew. Instinct told him also that he must not turn tail and run; if he had done so, it was possible that he would not have escaped the culvert alive. But more than anything else, Don instantly knew or believed that if he acted very matter-of-fact and clever—if he forgot that he was only a boy of twelve and at the same time acted the part to the hilt—this encounter might well turn into the great moment of his life, the chance to be a hero.

"Hallo," he finally said, and sat down.

He sat down opposite the man and put his knees up and his arms around his legs in the same way. "Isn't this a dandy place?" he said. The man did not answer; his eyes watched Don narrowly, as if he was trying to make out what game Don was playing. Outwardly, of course, Don must not look as if he was playing any game; and, in a sense, he wasn't.

When the man did not answer about what a fine place this was, Don thought of something else. He reached back, pulled the knapsack off his shoulders, and opened it. He said: "Would you like a sandwich?"

The man stared back in silence.

"I've got plenty," Don said, "and they're peanut butter."

No answer.

"See? Three of them," he went on. "You can have two and I'll have the other one."

No answer again. He busied himself with the waxpaper wrappings and opened them.

But the man did not look at the sandwiches; he looked at Don. Don picked up one of the sandwiches, took a bite, and then said: "Are you a tramp?" Don knew he wasn't, but he thought it would make the man feel more at ease with him.

"I like tramps," he went on, after another bite. "My uncle is a tramp." He said this in the same wishful, romantic spirit in which he used to say that his uncle was an Indian, and once, after he had come across the exotic word in a book, that his uncle was a rabbi. But the man was not interested; though he

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CHARLES JACKSON, the author of "Pretend You're A Hero," is fortyish, lives in America, and won acclaim with his "The Lost Weekend," the harrowing story of a young dipsomaniac's struggle against drunkenness. The book was a best-seller in Britain and the U.S.A. and, filmed with Ray Milland and Jane Wyman, won an Academy Award.

Don caught a glimpse of the ground where he had been sitting, and of the knife that lay there

never took his eyes off Don, he did not even seem to hear. Finally, very slowly, as if with extreme caution, he half rose from his crouching position, stretched out a long arm, and took the two sandwiches in his hand. Before he sat back again, Don caught a glimpse of a short, thick knife like a bowie knife lying in the dirt beside where the man's bottom had been. When he was seated again, the knife was again out of sight; but it was there, all right, within easy reach.

As he ate, Don looked him over. He seemed about as old as Don's father, which would be about forty. He wore heavy work boots and coarse cotton trousers that were very dirty, and torn in several places; they might have been a uniform. He was not a big man, but he looked strong, even powerful, especially in the shoulders and arms. He had thick black hair cut very close, a low forehead, small, half-closed, peering eyes, and, in the middle of his chin, a very deep cleft or dimple. He was badly in need of a shave, and Don found himself wondering how it was possible to shave the whiskers in so deep a hollow as that cleft in his chin. He looked tired out, as if he hadn't slept for days, yet keenly alert and watchful, too, almost jumpy.

Besides all this, though Don couldn't say why, he looked sad. Don knew that he was a hunted man, but even so, no hunt lasting only a week or even a month could ever have made him look that sad and lonely, as if he was the only man left in the world, or as if the whole world was against him. Don couldn't help feeling sorry for him, the more so because the man shut Don out from his company as if he wasn't even there.

"If you're a tramp," he said, "I wish you'd let me join up with you." The man said nothing. "I'd love to—it must be a wonderful life." The thing to do was to keep on talking, to make the man believe that Don had nothing against him. "No school," Don said, "nobody to order you around all the time. Nothing to do but just what you want to do, all day long—and go everywhere, and see new places, new people, things like that."

The man ate in silence, watching Don closely but at the same time seeming aloof, as if Don were a creature from another planet with whom there couldn't possibly be a common language.

"Aren't they good?" Don said, as the man finished the first sandwich and started on the second. "Of course, they aren't as good as when I started out; then they were just made, and fresh. But they're a lot better now than they would be later, all dry and curled up."

FINALLY, the man spoke—and Don had grown so used to the idea that he wasn't going to speak that he was surprised. He looked Don straight in the eye and said in a low, husky voice: "Where does this railroad go?"

"This railroad?" Don pointed above. "Why it goes down to Binghampton and then on into Pennsylvania somewhere."

"The other way, I mean."

"Oh, that way," Don said. "It goes on to Parsons Point. That's the end of the line."

"How far is it?"

"About twenty miles, I guess."

"What's there?"

"At Parsons Point? Why, nothing. Nothing but the coalyards—and oh, yes," he said, and suddenly felt the acute excitement of an idea, "the freighters that carry the coal across the lake."

"Lake?"

"Lake Ontario."

"Where to?"

"Cobourg."

"What's Cobourg?"

"Place in Canada." And as he said "Canada," he knew, though he did not change his expression by even a flicker, that he had uttered a kind of magic word. It meant, if the man could get there, freedom.

The man was silent for a long moment again, as he appeared to be weighing some idea, or maybe testing Don in his mind. Don tried to look friendly and helpful.

"Is there a train along here?" the man asked.

"Oh, yes," Don said. "There's one every afternoon."

"What kind of train? Passenger?"

"A kind of freight. I happen to know the driver," Don added proudly. "Friend of mine."

"What time is it due?"

"I don't know for sure, but, gee, it ought to be coming by any minute now. Sometime in the early afternoon, I mean."

"A fast freight?"

"No, not fast at all, along here. Because it slows down for Arcadia. Why, mister? You want to catch a ride?"

The man gave him a look. "None of your business. Understand?"

THE boy nodded obligingly. He understood, all right, but he was careful not to let the man know how well. Privately, he thought it was foolish for the man to get cross, because really he was playing as much of a game as Don was. The man was playing that he wasn't a convict and Don was playing that the man was getting away with it.

"I know it's none of my business," Don said, "but I just thought of something. Look, mister, if you really want to catch a ride on that freight, maybe I could stop it for you—or at least make it slow down."

The man eyed him with menacing suspicion. "How?"

"Well, I told you I know the driver."

"What good is that to me?"

"Well, if I didn't know him, how could I stop the train?"

The man stared at him searchingly. "Listen, kid. Are you on the level?"

"Of course I'm on the level," Don said.

And then, while the man sat there turning it over in his mind and the two of them looked at each other—at that very moment Don began to feel the approaching train. At first it was so slight that it could scarcely be noticed, merely the first faint jarrings and vibrations, but it was Mr. Colvin's train, all right. It must have been still a mile off, because Don couldn't hear it yet, but he could certainly feel it; and after another second, he noticed that the man could, too. He looked at Don quickly, and there was an odd expression in his eyes, like fear or excitement or maybe just indecision.

He frowned, his mouth worked, and he half got to his feet. Then he sat back again, his hand close beside his hip in the dirt, and fixed his eyes on Don.

Don sprang up. "Come on!" he said, as the vibration began to jar the whole tunnel. "There's the train now! Hurry up!"

"Don't you leave!" the man suddenly snarled. "Sit down!"

But Don was already ten or twelve feet off, on the run to the mouth of the culvert, and the curving tile walls of the tunnel were ringing with

Continued on page 30

Ziegler-Booth, the singing partners

by ELKAN ALLAN

The romantic couple who sing about love are sentimentalists themselves, with a gay, light-hearted approach to their work

On stage at the Garrick Theatre, Southport.

WHEN WEBSTER BOOTH ARRIVED at the television studios to sing "Silent Night" with the Luton Girls' Choir, he discovered to his horror that they had rehearsed it in English, though he had planned to sing the original German version. Hurriedly he learned the English words and, to make sure, had them written on a large piece of paper and hung above the camera. Just as the song was starting the paper blew away, and he was left with only an imperfect memory of the words. His wife, Anne Ziegler, crept up to the camera, stood next to it with the music, and mouthed the words to him. So perfectly did they work together that viewers never noticed anything amiss.

This close partnership has existed for the last twelve years, ever since their marriage and joint début. Both have continued their separate careers as tenor and soprano, but it is as "Anne Ziegler and Webster Booth, Singing the Songs You Love," that they are best known. Some musicians deplore the syrupy sweetness of their repertoire and their flamboyant arrangements, but they are in constant demand at music halls and Sunday concerts, earning from £200 to £400 a week; the 500 gramophone records they have made sell in hundreds of thousands; they keep a Daimler and three servants; and their popularity extends from the working-class housewife who has named her children Anne, Webster, Leslie (Booth's first name), and Keith (his son's name) to Queen Mary, who picked out their act as a favourite she wished to hear in her eightieth birthday B.B.C. programme.

On the stage they are the handsome, romantic couple who sing duets about love and memories, personifying the timeless happy-ever-after world of the fairy tales. At home, they resume a married life much more like those of their audiences. He is a tall, kindly fifty-year-old, who cheerfully calls his large-sized nose a "conk" and can never make up his mind whether or not to keep a moustache. She is shrewd, gentle and houseproud, likes making her own clothes, and is successfully keeping middle age at bay. She is sensitive about her exact age—forty-one—and it is inked out of articles stuck in her Press-cuttings book.

Sometimes they bicker, like every married couple. "But when we get on the stage we forget all our differences. The best way to make up any husband-and-wife quarrel is to do some work together," says Booth, in a voice which has never completely lost its Birmingham accent.

Their approach to their work is lighthearted. "We've sung most of our songs so many times that it's practically impossible to make a mistake, and Boo sometimes tries to make me dry up, just for fun," says Anne, whom "Boo" calls "Lottie." "He whispers awful things under his breath, won't let go of my hand, makes faces at me, and accidentally-on-purpose flips me across the face when he's gesturing. And I have to keep going as though nothing was wrong."

At home, with their dog Smokey, they listen to a new recording. They have made 500 records

Their "Good Luck" Rings

But to sing sentimental songs successfully, it is necessary to be sentimental oneself, and the Booths, whose home is full of pets, conscientiously wear "good luck" rings they gave each other early in their acquaintance.

They met in 1934, when Booth, a recognized singer, was given the part of Faust in the first British colour film ever made. Two hundred girls applied to play Marguerite; among them was a slim blonde who had come from Liverpool three months before to join a musical comedy. Born Irene Eastwood, she had changed her surname to that of her German grandmother, Ziegler, and put her favourite Anne in front. Her looks and her voice got her the job. She fell in love with the leading man, and into a divorce suit, for he was married already.

Until then, his career had been solid without being spectacular. He had sung at concert parties with Arthur Askey, but was discouraged when an old woman got up after a show and loudly complained to her companion: "Yon singer's not bad when 'e croons, but when 'e sings loud 'e's *'orrible*."

Booth's father, a hairdresser, was relieved when his nine-year-old son won a place in Lincoln Cathedral choir, for it meant a free education. One of the first rules laid down for him there was against going to football matches, in case he injured his voice shouting. "This was

"Sometimes he flips me on the face," says Anne

Packing for a tour. Anne always takes a trunkful of crinolines, costing up to 240 guineas each

a blow for me, because I was mad on football. I played goalie, and when I was fourteen, the Aston Villa coach saw me and offered me a place in the Villa Colts. I couldn't decide whether to accept, and played truant from my singing lesson to watch them again and make up my mind. Unfortunately—as I thought then—I was spotted at the game, and got such a thrashing I dared not take the offer."

The choirmaster's methods were none too gentle. He used to push a broken baton into the children's mouths to force them wide open and push their tongues down. The psychological scar has remained with Booth, and even today, he is unable to have his throat examined, the touch of anything stiff on his tongue making him violently sick.

This was highly inconvenient when, in the opening scene on the first night of *The Vagabond King*, an actor duelling with him overenthusiastically hit him across the throat. He was almost knocked out. By the last curtain he could hardly raise a sound. A specialist was sent for, but because of Booth's inability to allow his larynx to be examined, nothing could be done. "He kept trying to look down, but I almost bit his fingers off. In the end he just packed his bag and walked out." It was a week before Booth could sing again.

Audition Was A Failure

Anne was going to be a dancer, but her instep dropped when she was thirteen, and she studied singing instead. When the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company came to Liverpool, she was granted an audition. But the night before, she caught 'flu and the audition was a miserable failure. In the chorus was Webster Booth, who had become an accountant, but who had gone back to singing later. They did not meet then, however.

"I suppose my disappointment was Fate's way of paying me back for the fiendish child I had been," says Anne. "I had always refused to do any work at school, and at home I played such tricks as pretending to faint and clutching the tablecloth as I fell to the ground, bringing all the tea-things with me. I was such a wicked child that my mother kept a riding whip on the dining table between my equally naughty brother and me, to thrash us when we misbehaved."

The Booths' schedule is sometimes crammed to bursting point. Recently, in Glasgow, they finished a concert at nine twenty on Saturday evening and, while Anne caught an express to London, Webster caught the train to Preston, in Lancashire, where he had left his car. He arrived there before dawn, slept for two hours and drove nearly 100 miles across country to Ashby-de-la-Zouch for a concert on Sunday afternoon. Meanwhile, in London, Anne packed some bags, and went to Luton to sing in *Tom Jones*. After his concert, Webster drove to London, and they met in time to sing at the Albert Hall on Sunday evening. After that, they hurried down to Eastbourne, where they started a week's variety on Monday evening.

Trooped Into Bedroom

"The only way we can carry on is to sleep in the afternoon whenever we can," explains Anne. This, however, had an awkward consequence when they sang for the British Legion in Motherwell. It was afternoon by the time they got there, and they had eaten lunch. But the Legion had arranged a banquet for them, which they attended as briefly as possible before retiring to an adjoining room to rest. "Unfortunately, the people at the luncheon mistook our room for the cloakroom," says Anne, "and when they finished lunch they all trooped into our bedroom looking for their coats. I've never been so embarrassed in my life."

She takes a trunkful of crinolines wherever she goes. They have become her trade mark, and one of them had 100 yards of mauve and pink net in it. She has nine in her wardrobe, including one made ten years ago and worn so often that she dare not appear in it again. "People would say it was the only one I had." She keeps a diary of every engagement, with a note of each dress, so that she does not repeat herself next time she sings at the same place. The crinolines cost from 85 to 240 guineas each.

Her husband wears out three dress suits a year. "It's the packing that ruins them." On the maiden voyage of *Imperial Star* to Australia, water flooded the hold, and all his dress shirts, ties and waistcoats were soaked and dyed by the colours near them. Booth collected all the disinfectant in the ship and soaked them in it. The captain sent a radio message to Teneriffe, the next port, and a laundry was standing by to wash them. This restored their looks, but six weeks later, as he was dressing for a concert, he found that his shirt disintegrated as he tried to put it on. The next one did the same thing, and so on, right through his stock. He had to borrow a shirt before he could sing.

Although they have received 250 guineas for nine minutes' work—when they travelled to Perth for an all-star broadcast cabaret to launch an hotel—their regular fee is £150 for a concert. Cabaret appearances are usually worth £100, and they get a guaranteed minimum of £300 a week on the halls. On top of this are royalties from their gramophone records, which have been as much as £1,000 a year. "But everything costs a lot," points out ex-accountant Booth. "Our house and secretary and servants run into £50 every week, and our accompanist gets up to £30 a week, plus expenses. And we still have the agent and the Income Tax man to settle. But we can't complain."

For their fees they have to perform some songs which, however pleasant for the first few times to hear and to sing, become almost sickening after a thousand airings. "Sometimes I feel I'll go mad if I have to sing 'We'll Gather Lilacs' or 'The Keys of Heaven' just once more," confesses Anne. "But at every concert we are bound to get several requests for them, and we are the servants of the public."

Sir Henry's Question

To escape this monotony, they have made occasional forays into grand opera, and both sing in oratorios. But on the one occasion he sang at a Promenade Concert, Booth felt he was insulted by Sir Henry Wood. He and Parry Jones had been asked to sing the tenor parts in Beethoven's Choral Fantasia, and he arrived before Jones. Sir Henry Wood met him and asked, in front of the whole B.B.C. Chorus: "Are you the stand-in for Parry Jones?" He was so offended that he has stubbornly refused to sing again at a Prom, although Sir Henry has since died. "It's very naughty of him," says Anne.

As for the future, they talk—wistfully and without conviction—of retiring and settling down in the country. Television is opening up a new field for them, and they give it greater attention than the immediate payment warrants.

"Sometimes, when we're feeling particularly pleased with ourselves, we like to think that everyone in Britain has been made a little happier just for a moment some time by our singing. After all," says Anne, "there's no harm in being sentimental, is there?" THE END

Inspector Curry was not prepared for Gina, nor for Gina's colourful clothes. "I see you're not wearing mourning, Mrs. Hudd," he said dryly

They do it with mirrors

by AGATHA CHRISTIE

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

Of all those he questioned, Curry was puzzled most by Gina. Was the girl deliberately lying?

MISS MARPLE, a deceptively meek-and-mild village spinster, was staying with her old schoolfriend, Carrie Louise Serrocold, at Stonygates, a country house turned into a college for juvenile delinquents. The college was financed by the trust established by Carrie Louise's first husband, Eric Gulbrandsen, and run by her third husband, Lewis Serrocold, an energetic idealist with a passion for reforming young criminals.

Miss Marple, baffled already by a household that included 200 delinquents as well as the stepchildren of Carrie Louise's two previous marriages, accepted with calm the arrival of yet another stepson.

The newcomer was Christian Gulbrandsen, a trustee of the Gulbrandsen funds, who had come to see Lewis Serrocold. But Serrocold happened to be away.

The night he returned, there was a curious scene. Edgar Lawson, a psychopathic delinquent who lived with the family, entered the great hall after dinner and hysterically accused Lewis Serrocold of being his father. Lewis, aware that Lawson had already claimed Churchill and Montgomery as his father, managed to coax him into his study, from where, presently, the shocked company outside heard pistol shots.

When the locked door was opened, Lawson was slobberingly contrite, Lewis breathless but unharmed. But that was not the end of it. Miss "Jolly" Bellever, Carrie Louise's companion, found Christian Gulbrandsen shot dead in his room. He had been typing at a table.

Miss Marple, whose reputation as an amateur detective was known to Inspector Curry, the policeman called in to investigate the murder, was asked by him to keep a sharp eye on the household. He had learned from Lewis Serrocold that someone was trying to poison Carrie Louise—the information, Serrocold said, that Gulbrandsen had come to give him.

Serrocold, too, asked Miss Marple to watch out, to see that Carrie Louise was not harmed. The poisoner, he suspected, was one of the intimate family circle, which included Gina Hudd, Carrie Louise's exotic granddaughter; Wally Hudd, Gina's sullen ex-G.I. husband; Stephen Restarick, Carrie Louise's stepson of her second marriage, who ran the college's amateur dramatic company; Alex Restarick, Stephen's brother, a theatrical producer, who had arrived a few minutes after the murder; and Mrs. Mildred Strete, Carrie Louise's vinegary widowed daughter.

PART 3

Ideal Suspect

INSPECTOR CURRY sat down opposite Miss Marple and gave her a rather peculiar smile. "So Mr. Serrocold has been asking you to act as watchdog?" he said.

"Well, yes." With an apologetic smile, Miss

Continued on page 23

Sir Ben's scientists solve everyday problems

by RONALD CLARK

He guides the up-in-the-clouds thinking of men who, nevertheless, find new ways of keeping eggs longer and razor blades sharper

Sir Ben Lockspeiser, "unscientific scientist." His work sets the pace of civilization

EVERY MORNING, SIXTY-YEAR-OLD Sir Ben Lockspeiser, a quiet, benevolent-looking man with a head of white hair, who in 1938 began planning the defences which helped to win the Battle of Britain, gets up and shaves, breakfasts with his wife in his pleasant Farnborough house, catches the London train and, little more than an hour later, starts work in his airy office.

In that first hour and a half of the day, Sir Ben has touched, at a score of points, the little-known work of the backroom boys whom he has directed and guided since 1949. For the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, whose secretary he now is, probes more deeply than most citizens imagine into the life of every man, woman and child.

Sir Ben's description of the work covered by the 4,000 workers in the thirty-odd laboratories of his £5,000,000 a year department is a revealing one. "It is," he says, "a range of things which sets the pace of civilization."

This is not merely one of Sir Ben's bright phrases, but a hard statement of fact. For the razor-blades with which he — and millions of other men—shave every day are wrapped in paper treated with a special anti-corrosive liquid developed by the department's chemical research laboratory at Teddington. The grain from which his breakfast bread is made has been kept safe from pests by entomologists working in the department's pest infestation laboratory at Slough; and his breakfast egg has probably been preserved by a new method worked out by the department's food experts.

Concern For Atom Workers

He reaches Farnborough Station over a road crossing developed by the scientists of the Road Research Laboratory at Harmondsworth; checks the time of his train with a watch tested by its makers to one ten-thousandth of a second with the help of the National Physical Laboratory. Even the wood in the local timber yard, which he buys for special jobs in the garden, has probably been tested by the Forest Products Research Laboratory at Princes Risborough.

There is a story about this "unscientific scientist," as his critics are apt to call him, which reveals something of the character of the man who guides the super-specialized minds investigating such a range of subjects. When Sir Ben was directing scientific research at the Ministry of Supply shortly after the war, the Atomic Research Station at Harwell came under his control. He soon learned that the workers there, hemmed in and isolated from most normal contacts with the rest of the world, were becoming affected by these conditions. So he laid

Leslie Woodgate and Nadine Belgrave with a model of the proposed Severn Bridge

The £10,000 instrument with one main job—comparing the lengths of Britain's standard yards

down that a regular series of musical concerts would be given at Harwell; and, to start the ball rolling, he took down there—and led—a trio which he had built up at Farnborough.

He might, in fact, be called the ordinary man's scientist. He appreciates not only the needs of the ordinary people, but the ways in which their experiences can impinge on and even direct the flow of research. Throughout the thirty-odd years which it has taken him to reach his present coveted post as £3,500-a-year secretary of the D.S.I.R., he has always encouraged the idea that the scientist should be not only a cloistered specialist, but something approximating to the Elizabethans' "compleat man."

Sitting in quiet tweeds, pipe in hand, behind the cleared desk in his fourth-floor office overlooking the buildings of St. James's Square, Sir Ben explains how tactics are worked out by the boards controlling each separate research organization. These organizations range from the Water Pollution Research Laboratory at Watford to the Fire Research Station at Boreham Wood, from the Fuel Research Station at Greenwich to the Geological Survey and Museum in London.

With matters under his control ranging from the birth of the controversial zebra crossings to the testing of new metals for Army equipment, it is natural that Sir Ben is chary of saying which of the various laboratories in his scientific empire is the most important.

There is, however, one thing on which he holds strong views. Research into fundamental knowledge—the "pure" research whose utility is at best a long-term affair—he describes as "the scientific capital on which all other scientific activities and technology ultimately depend."

Studying Secret Weapons

When it comes to research, there are few things more fundamental than the work carried on in the prim red-brick buildings laid out neatly around Bushy House, the Queen Anne residence near the Thames at Teddington which Queen Victoria gave as a site for the National Physical Laboratory.

Even this "pure" research has queer byways, however. A group of scientists intently watched a model swaying in an eleven-inch wide cylinder, through which air rushed at twice the speed of sound. Another group of workers lived for weeks in a deserted aircraft hangar in Bedfordshire, their whole lives centred around a queer contraption of metal tracery built mainly from parts of old Bailey bridges. Both groups came from the National Physical Laboratory. The first was studying, early in 1944, just how one of Hitler's secret weapons would fall, by means of a model of the weapon contrived by methods which are still secret. The second group was working, until a few months ago, on a "mock-up" of the proposed Severn Bridge, finding out exactly how it would react to the strongest gales possible in that area.

Most of the work of the N.P.L., however, has far less obvious uses, and is far more fundamental. Outsiders realize just *how* fundamental when they see, in the great vaults of Bushy House, a complicated-looking instrument that cost £10,000, bears the impressive name of dilatometer comparatometer, and has one main job in life—comparing the lengths of any two of the five "standard yards" which exist in Britain.

There was an "Iron Ulna," or yard, in Edward I's time. Then there was a brass bar in Henry VII's reign, and another in Elizabeth I's. Yet another one was lost when the House of Commons was burned down in 1834.

"Today's yard," says F. R. Tolman, of the laboratory's metrology division, "is one of five made in 1854 from Bailey's metal—sixteen parts copper, two and a half parts tin and one part zinc. One copy—the real Imperial yard—is held by the Board of Trade, one is held at the Mint, a third by the Royal Society, a fourth by the House of Commons, and the fifth by the Royal Observatory.

"Once every ten years," explains Tolman, "all except the Board of Trade yard must be compared. Once every twenty years, the Board of Trade yard must be compared as well. But—and here's the snag—it's illegal for the five yards to be brought together at the same time, in case they are destroyed accidentally."

Found True Speed Of Light

Much of the work carried on by the ten divisions of the N.P.L. is of similar abstruse interest—the electricity division, for instance, recently found that the previously accepted speed of light was wrong by eleven miles per second. Yet nearly all the work done by the other laboratories rests on the fundamental facts of measurement pinned down by the N.P.L. What is more, even the most academic research has unexpected uses.

"Take titanium, for instance," says Professor Bullard, director of the N.P.L. "It's only twice as heavy as aluminium, yet it is as strong as steel. What is more, it's the fourth most common metal in the world. We're running out of most things, but we'll never run out of that." The one snag is the difficulty of separating it from the other things with which it is usually found. Work on that is now going on in one of the red-brick buildings at Teddington.

While the N.P.L. carries on this fundamental research, however, it also "does jobs" for people and organizations—and Professor Bullard can point proudly to the fact that these jobs bring in more than £250,000 a year to set against the £270,000 that the laboratory would otherwise cost the taxpayer.

Perhaps the most interesting of these jobs was one of the least academic—the production of two rocking beds for an insomniac. The insomniac was the late Sir Alfred Yarrow, who could sleep only in a moving car. On his instructions (and at his cost) a complicated vibrating mechanism which simulated the movements of a car was fitted by the N.P.L. beneath a bed. For a while, Sir Alfred slept at ease. Then he found that the vibrations repeated themselves, and when a second bed was adapted for him, the N.P.L fitted an even more complicated mechanism that ensured that the vibrations were virtually never repeated.

£500 Tests For Shipbuilders

"Our most frequently used service," says Professor Bullard, "is that which we give to shipbuilders with the help of our ship-testing tanks. We charge £500 for a test."

Models of the Mulberry Harbour which made the D-Day invasion possible were tested out here. Today, four out of every five merchant ships being built in Britain are constructed to designs which have been modified—sometimes with ten per cent more efficiency—after tests in the N.P.L. tanks.

Such practical applications of the "up-in-the-clouds" academic thinking of the N.P.L. workers are typical. And they are in line with the day-by-day problems solved by Sir Ben Lockspeiser's other laboratories.

NEXT WEEK: How Sir Ben's scientists make food taste better—and keep moths at bay

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Starting next week

THE HAPPY HUNTED

Real-life adventures of Brigadier George Clifton

"AN escape story that has seldom been equalled."

This is what General Lord Freyberg, V.C., Governor-General of New Zealand, says of an exciting new book of true personal adventure which JOHN BULL is to serialize exclusively, starting next week.

The author of **THE HAPPY HUNTED** is Brigadier George Clifton, D.S.O., M.C., who was taken prisoner in the Western Desert, and made nine attempts to escape from captivity.

On one attempt Clifton made a six-day trek on foot through the open desert. Recaptured, he was brought before Field Marshal Rommel, who afterwards wrote: "Clifton impressed us as a very brave man and very likeable."

In Italy, travelling in disguise, Clifton made a dash for Switzerland, only to be caught again on the frontier. Later he was severely wounded while leaping from a train. Undaunted, he carried on his attempts and finally escaped to freedom from Germany.

Brigadier Clifton's remarkable adventure story will be illustrated in JOHN BULL with paintings by Gordon Horner, himself a former prisoner in Italy and Germany, and with photographs from Clifton's album.

Make sure of reading THE HAPPY HUNTED from the first exciting instalment by placing an order for JOHN BULL with your newsagent or bookstall now

Seamus Delargy with one of his folklore manuscripts. He started the work alone. Now the Government is carrying on

Tim Murphy (right), a Folklore Commission collector, listens to a tale told by Sean Sigerson. Stories have been handed down through generations

Seamus Delargy's Irish Story

by EDWARD POWER

There are fairies in it, and banshees and leprechauns. Already it runs to 200,000,000 words, and it may take centuries to finish

PAINSTAKING SEAMUS DELARGY, who is sometimes also called Seamus O'Duilearga, is in charge of the writing down for posterity of a very long story. It may well be the longest story ever written. Already it runs to more than 200,000,000 words.

There are fairies in it, and banshees and leprechauns; rural arts and crafts; work and sport; match-makings and cursings. All these things are Delargy's business, for this wiry-haired, ruddy-complexioned man of fifty-three is director of the Irish Folklore Commission, which receives £11,000 a year from the Government of the Republic for its work of scientifically investigating the old ways and beliefs and stories of the people.

In August, 1923, Seamus Delargy, a shy but keen student of Dublin's University College, cycled over highways bomb-blasted by the civil war to the remote Iveragh Peninsula in County Kerry, to learn in the heart of the *Gaeltacht* (Gaelic-speaking district) the language of his forefathers. That was the beginning of the story that is being written today, and will go on being written for years to come.

The little fishing village of Kilrelig, a huddle of thatched white cottages beside a blue bay, wove a web round Delargy from which he has never escaped. Here he discovered the key to the greatest treasure chest of oral literature in the Western world. The story of the people through historic and prehistoric ages was hidden there in the memories of the old Gaelic-speaking fishermen-farmers and their womenfolk. It has been passed down through countless generations by word of mouth, and these men and women were its last repository, the end of a line that went back beyond the time of Homer. They were dying out quickly, their lore with them, for the few young people who did not leave the district for America and Britain were turning to modern ways and the English language.

It Was Now Or Never

"It was a daring thing," Delargy recalls now, "for me, an Ulsterman with an English tongue in my mouth, to undertake to record the Gaelic folklore of the people of Kerry. Two things inspired me. If it was not done quickly, it could never be done, and if I did not do it, apparently nobody else would."

So, two years later, when he felt he had mastered the Kerry idiom of the Irish language, Delargy began to write the story. He talked about it in Dublin, and others joined in the work. Soon the Irish Folklore Institute was formed, and in 1935 the Government set the official seal on the collectors' notebooks by establishing the Irish Folklore Commission and appointing Professor Delargy as director.

At its headquarters in a Georgian mansion in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, the standard collection of the Commission runs to 200,000,000 words in 1,176 volumes, each of 500 pages. The Commission employs only five full-time folklore collectors, but has 300 volunteers scattered through the country, and in addition senior schoolchildren in all twenty-six counties have produced more than 1,000,000 pages of manuscript about local traditions, observances and customs. There are also 2,000 recordings of music and songs and more than 4,000 gramophone records of speech.

Getting the old *seanachai* (pronounced "shanakee" and meaning "story-teller") to talk is not always easy. Delargy recalls his first meeting with Sean O'Briain—"the best story-teller I ever met"—in 1932, two years before the old man's death.

At the door of his cottage, at the end of a boulder-strewn Connemara lane, the fisherman courteously invited Delargy in, but showed the native's suspicion of the stranger. There was an awkward silence, until a young dog rushed in through the open door and scuttled under the table. Delargy joined in the chase, tangled up the dog in a pile of fishing nets in the corner, and helped to drag it out of the door.

That broke the ice. A man who could handle a dog like that was obviously all right. Soon Delargy heard the reason for his cool reception. Plain-clothes police were combing the district for poteen-makers, and all strangers were suspect. Sean O'Briain did nothing by halves. He brought out a black bottle of the spirit, and placed it on the table. "A glass of it brought tears to my eyes," chuckles Delargy, "but it only put an added sparkle in old Sean's."

That evening Sean told Delargy the story of "The Magic Flight." The story was told while the old man's five grandchildren played in the room, and hens, chickens, dogs and geese sneaked in, were discovered, and chased out again amid clamour and excitement. The house was on the sea-edge, and in the spring tides the water seeped up under the door. "But," boasted Sean, "it never yet put out the fire."

Sean had learned his stories from his uncle when out fishing in the curragh (a tarred canvas and lath boat like a coracle) and Delargy has practically all of them now in manuscript or on records. A story, full of antique traditional phrases and with turns and flourishes added by

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He sat alone in radiance among the frozen peaks. Then the cold came, striking at him like a dagger

reel around you, so that you felt you wanted to clutch at something to save yourself from falling—only there was nothing to clutch. Just your feet, planted insecurely in what were little more than toe-holds, and the almost vertical slope reeling vertiginously away below you.

It needed only twenty steps, and then the slope eased; but those twenty steps called for plenty of nerve. Beyond it, there was a patch of snow under a big outcrop of rock where a platform could be levelled almost big enough to hold one of the small tents. There, the last time, they had pitched Camp Six. This time, with more experience, they had managed to cut out a stage, and so it would become Camp Five. It lay about 3,000 feet below the summit.

From that camp, they could climb another 1,000 feet by way of a snow-filled couloir—not a pleasant place, since it was bombarded periodically by pieces of rock broken by the frosts and the thaws from the cliffs on either hand. Last year they had reached the head of the couloir. From there, Hugh Mortimor had traced out a way across a steep pitch of exposed rock on to a precipitous snow-slope. Above the slope there was more rock, but through the rock there ran a little gully. Beyond that gully, it had seemed to him, the way to the summit should be clear.

They had not been able to make the attempt, because the weather had broken suddenly with wind and snow, and they had been lucky to get down again with their lives.

FOR this attempt, Bruno went up with Johnny Repp from the col to establish Camp Five. There they were to rest one day, and then make an assault upon the summit. If they failed, they would come down to the col, and Harrington and Hugh Mortimor would try.

Johnny was a first-class climber, and they made good progress up to the "bad bit." Bruno had taken a couple of pitons up, with the idea of stringing a rope across the face from end to end. They were half-way across when it seemed to Bruno that Johnny, who was in the lead, was tiring. His strokes were becoming weaker, the pauses between them when he leant panting on the haft of his ice-axe becoming longer.

By then they had cut about ten steps, and Bruno had been paying the rope out as Johnny inched across. Now he called him back. Johnny came back slowly, almost uncertainly. Bruno belayed the rope round the piton and again round his ice-axe and tried to keep it taut. It looked to him as though Johnny might slip. When Johnny was safely beside him, he said casually: "How's it going?"

Johnny passed his hand over his head. "Bit muzzy," he said, "but I'll be all right. Liver, I think. Those blasted sardines for breakfast. Filthy things to have on one's stomach, up here at any rate."

"What say we go back," asked Bruno, "and try again tomorrow?"

"Not on your life. I'll be all right, honest I will."

So they went on. Bruno had misgivings, but he swallowed them. He wanted Johnny to get to the top. He comforted himself with the thought that these attacks of sickness frequently assailed climbers at high altitudes; but that they usually passed off as quickly as they came. He took the lead himself, leaving Johnny to hold the rope; and when Johnny followed him across there was no sign of his former uncertainty.

Together they set about levelling a site for the tent—slow, awkward work, and they couldn't get it level anyway, so that finally the tent was pitched canting crazily outwards, with the flaps at one side extending beyond the edge of their platform. Bruno, by way of a precaution, took the outside berth, overhanging space.

Johnny didn't get better. Instead, during that night, he got worse. Much worse. Bruno cursed himself for a fool for not having turned back when he first saw the symptoms, and then blessed himself for his forethought in stringing the rope across the "bad bit." Altitude sickness can be a dangerous thing. It makes a man so weak that he cannot help himself; and the only cure is to get him down to a level where he can breathe a decent quantity of oxygen again. That was a bad night for Bruno.

HE got up early. From the tent, he could just see the camp down below on the col, and when he saw the first signs of life below—it was one of the porters getting snow to melt for breakfast—he shouted and waved. The tiny figure, black against the whiteness of the snow, seemed to watch him for an interminable time. Then it moved swiftly across to the sahib's tent, and presently Mortimor appeared, struggling into his jacket, to be followed a moment or two later by Harrington.

"Johnny's sick," Bruno shouted. He did not know if his voice would carry, but he tried to make his gestures urgent.

Harrington and Mortimor disappeared. Presently they reappeared again, and began ascending the slope. You cannot hurry on a Himalayan mountain, but they made the best speed they could. Perhaps an hour later, they were at the other side of the "bad bit."

Bruno called across to them. "Johnny's sick. We've got to get him down." And he gave instructions for one of them to come across with another rope.

Harrington came. He came across the bad bit as though he was crossing Piccadilly, supremely confident in himself, ignoring the danger, moving with the precision and skill of the great mountaineer he was.

Bruno couldn't help envying him his self assurance, his tacit assumption that he was equal to

Continued on page 29

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THE MIGHTY BALCON (4) *by LAWRENCE EARL*

A flop started his new fashion in films

Turning his back on Hollywood, Sir Michael Balcon found a way to make British films with a native flavour and deeper meaning

On location during the making of *Painted Boats*, Balcon looks over his shoulder to talk to pipe-smoking director Charles Crichton and the producer, Henry Cornelius

Producer Monja Danichewsky takes time off from supervising *Whisky Galore* to talk over a problem with bearded Compton Mackenzie, the novelist who wrote the story

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OF Sir Michael Balcon, the film producer, point to him as a man who has matured late in his long career. This is particularly noticeable in Sir Michael's approach to picture-making, which changed drastically after his bitter quarrel with Louis B. Mayer in 1938. Not long after his disagreement with Mayer, Balcon disconsolately dropped in to see Major Reginald Baker, his old friend and associate of their Islington picture-making days, who was now connected with the studios at Ealing.

"Reg, I've got something to tell you," Balcon said gloomily.

The two men had grown very close over the years. Baker took one look at his friend and nodded slowly. "I think I know what it is," he hazarded. "You're going to leave Metro." When he saw the guess had been a good one, he continued: "Well, that's fine, Mick. You and I will be able to start where we left off."

Baker made this remark with some satisfaction. He was an expert administrator, a wizard at finance, but since he had parted from Balcon he had not found anyone else who so perfectly complemented with creative productivity his own administrative talents. Now the two shook hands on their renewed partnership.

When he came to Ealing, at first as an independent producer, the amount of money available for Balcon to make pictures was ridiculously small. He contributed to the pot himself out of his personal bank account; and when he made *The Ware Case*, its star, Clive Brook, agreed to forgo his usual salary for an interest in the film's future. Financially, Balcon had lost much caste since his affluent M-G-M days, but he was a vastly happier man in his rediscovered freedom.

Ideas That Changed His Life

Besides, in *The Ware Case* he thought he saw an augury for good times to come. For one thing, since Clive Brook had also starred, sixteen years previously, in *Woman to Woman*, his presence in the picture linked it sentimentally in the producer's mind to his skyrocketing beginning in films. For another, the critics welcomed the film joyously and predicted that Balcon would show Ealing Studios, which had been having a thin time, the way to film-making prosperity. He determined to do so.

During this period, Balcon did a great deal of soul-searching which was to change his entire life. "Before Ealing," he remarked recently, "I was more interested in the financial success of films than in other aspects, and I leaned heavily on the American pattern." He knew he would still have to make profitable films, or go out of business. But, he wondered, wasn't there some way to give them a native flavour and a deeper meaning? He let the problem simmer in his mind.

The influences which switched Balcon's thinking away from pure commercialism in picture-producing to something a bit better are hard to peg down. Doubtless the strict supervisory methods of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer had helped to crystallize an uneasiness he had felt for some time. In 1932, when Robert Flaherty, the documentary film maker, could find no one else to finance him, Balcon agreed to produce his *Man of Aran*, and was deeply impressed by Flaherty's realistic approach and by the touches of social consciousness which made themselves subtly felt in nearly every reel of film he shot. At about this time, also, Balcon first employed as a minor studio worker a youth named Penrose Tennyson, great-grandson of the poet.

Balcon soon marked the young man out as a

Penrose Tennyson, who set the new film pattern, with Nova Pilbeam. They married in 1939

film technician with a promising future. Blond and blue-eyed, with sensitive features, Tennyson had a friendly nature, but it was spiced with a quality of toughness. When Balcon moved to M-G-M, Tennyson went with him and later followed him to Ealing. Then, in 1938, when Tennyson was only twenty-six, Balcon made him a director, cautiously giving him a budget of only £12,000 for his first picture. With this small sum, Tennyson made *There Ain't No Justice*.

"It was a first-class commercial flop," Balcon said later, "but it was praised by the critics. It dealt with a special problem—not a very vital one, perhaps—racketeering in the boxing world. But it was enough to give me food for thought."

By the time war broke out, Balcon had come close to finding a satisfactory approach to film-making for those times. Again with young Tennyson, he made *Convoy*, a plotted story with documentary roots. Balcon was pleased when this picture won critical acclaim. He was delighted when it was cited in Parliament as "fine propaganda for the Navy." But when the picture also made money, he was overjoyed. Now he was sure he was on the right track; and he began building up a staff of directors and producers—men like Basil Dearden, Michael Relph, Harry Watt and Sidney Cole—who could expand and refine the pattern Tennyson had helped to set.

The war itself greatly influenced Balcon's development. For the first few weeks, most producers feared that the Government would clamp down on all film-making; but Balcon was soon convinced that films could and should be a vital propaganda force in the war effort. Besides, he argued, they were good for morale. It was not long before he began to receive official encouragement, and he made such notable war films, all with a strong documentary flavour, as *The Foreman Went To France, Nine Men, Ships With Wings, Next of Kin, San Demetrio—London*, and a number of others. In connection with one of these, he incurred the displeasure of Winston Churchill.

Churchill's remarkable vitality in those days is well known. He seemed to find enough hours in the day to lead his Government, thunder his famous speeches, conduct the war—and still keep an eye on any current film which might have propaganda value. At a private preview of *Ships With Wings*, the Prime Minister noted a scene in which Fleet Air Arm pilots were compelled to take off from the blazing flight deck of an aircraft carrier. At this preview he was reported to have overheard a woman guest remark, "If they allow things like that, I'll never let a son of mine join the Fleet Air Arm!" Churchill at once requested that the film should not be shown to the public.

Balcon was stunned. While it was true that Churchill probably did not have powers to order the film to be stopped, Balcon would have felt impelled to accede to his request if the Prime Minister had persisted with it. Finally, Churchill agreed to leave the decision to the late Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, then First Sea Lord. This made Balcon more jittery than before, since Sir Dudley had the reputation of being actively opposed to publicity of all kinds. In addition, Balcon felt that the Admiral could not help but be influenced by the Prime Minister's unfavourable view of the picture.

Eventually, Sir Dudley saw *Ships With Wings* at a private showing, while Balcon anxiously awaited his verdict in a neighbouring pub. Finally it came: "The First Sea Lord sees no objection to the showing of this picture." In sheer relief, Balcon, who is a moderate drinker, downed three quick pink gins. They were accompanied by three toasts: one for Sir Dudley, one for Mr. Churchill, and one for *Ships With Wings*.

Donald Duck Of Film World

"You know, don't you, that Micky used to be the Donald Duck of the British film industry?" Lady Balcon said to an acquaintance some weeks ago, referring to Sir Michael's voluble, tempestuous windmill-tilting for which he was noted until recent years. "He used to fight for his causes at the drop of a hat."

One of Balcon's causes, early in the war, was linked with his own intense patriotism. He thought it shameful that certain British screen personalities, actors and technicians, should have rushed off to the comparative quiet and peace of Hollywood: and he did not hesitate to state his views. He became so incensed at the wartime flight of film people whom he felt could contribute to Britain's war effort that he wrote and signed a scathing article about them for a Sunday newspaper. He named it, "I Call Them Deserters!" Shortly after this, somebody asked him what had happened to an English actor of military age who was making films in America. "He's missing — believed well," Balcon snapped back.

This bitterness against Hollywood "deserters" was heightened when, in 1941, young Pen Tennyson, who had joined the Navy, was killed in an air accident in Scotland. Balcon was heartbroken. "For a man who is not overtly emotional, Mick was deeply affected by Tennyson's death," a colleague of Sir Michael's said. "He felt that Pen would have been one of the great figures in films if he had lived; and it was what Mick felt he could do with Tennyson that has helped to shape the type of films we now make at Ealing."

Swipe At U.S. Distributors

Later, Balcon turned his Donald Duck tactics on to American film distributors who, he felt, were not giving British films fair play in their market. "The quality of British films," Balcon said acidly, "has nothing to do with their failure to gain a foothold in the American market. That is due to the agreed policy of a small group of American industrialists who control the American cinemas and therefore the purchasing power of films." He added: "It is technical skill and creative talent that make good films—not millions—and this skill and this talent can be developed on a large scale here and acquired at reasonable cost." As a result of his frankness, he soon earned the reputation of being the "most dynamic and outspoken man

Director Harry Watt: "When I get two-bob-a-word cables, I know it's time to come home"

Balcon talks to director Robert Hamer (right) at Ealing studios. Four cinema seats must be sold, Hamer had calculated, to pay for every second spent in shooting a film

in the British film industry." He had turned his back on Hollywood and was determined to produce a British product which would stand on its native merits.

It was largely as a postscript to his one-man crusade against the American film monopoly that Balcon later attacked J. Arthur Rank who, he thought, seemed to be trying to create for himself a monopoly in British film-making. He lashed out at the mill-owning millionaire so hard and so frequently that workers around Ealing, bearing in mind the famous greyhound, Mick the Miller, often referred to their boss as "Mick the anti-Miller"—the miller in this case being Rank.

Balcon was always more than ready in those days to jump into a fight he thought worthwhile. Once he met a friend after attending a film luncheon. Balcon was beaming. "I sat there at the top table, old boy," he chortled, "surrounded by all the cream of our industry. As far as I could count I was on speaking terms with three of them."

Considering Rank's growing power, it was probably fortunate for Balcon that Rank is not by nature a vindictive man. One day he and Balcon were brought together by a mutual friend. "Let's stop this dog-fighting and let's fight for British films together," Rank proposed, and Mick agreed. Now the two are close friends, and Balcon says that, without Rank's help, Ealing could not have remained in continuous production through the difficult postwar years.

Barb In The Honeyed Phrase

Balcon has mellowed as his confidence has grown, and today he seldom complains publicly about the unfair treatment he still feels British films get in America. But he is still able and willing to bury a barb in a honeyed phrase if the spirit moves him.

Until the end of the war, Balcon was—politically speaking—a professed Liberal, but he voted Labour in 1945 and has done so consistently since. However, because he owned a home and rolling green acres in Sussex, many who did not know him intimately assumed that he was a Tory. Thus he received a request from a group of Young Conservatives for a donation towards a dog show, the proceeds of which were to go to party funds.

Balcon finds it hard to refuse requests of this sort; but he sent a note along with his contribution. "The enclosed," he wrote, "is not so much because I support the Conservatives, but because I am fond of dogs." Since then, his political views, at least, have been better understood.

When the war ended, many British studios entered an era of reckless and lavish spending. Balcon refused to let his producers match them in that race. "This can't last," he told them. "If it does go on, the whole industry may crash." Yet, in spite of everything, costs continued to increase. One day, Balcon stormed into his monthly round-table conference.

"We've got to cut down," he roared. "We must make pictures to compete for quality in the international market, but we must rely on the British market only to pay for our costs." Then he added one of his occasional little homilies: "Success in the film industry comes from the things you don't buy. You have to fix your values and you mustn't go beyond."

Plan To Keep Costs Down

As a result of all this, films at his studio were limited to about £150,000 each. Since then, wages and costs of materials have continued to rise—but £150,000 has remained the average cost of pictures at Ealing.

"We keep our budget down by cutting shooting schedules, economizing on sets, grouping artists into the shortest possible shooting period, and jig-sawing our schedules to use more expensive artists for the least possible time," explains Hal Mason, Balcon's production supervisor. "Everything is done very carefully on paper before the actual shooting, which is the most expensive phase."

During one of Balcon's rigid economy campaigns, in the film crisis of 1948, instructions had been passed round the studio to save on everything possible. Old envelopes were to be used over and over again; the backs of discarded scripts were to substitute for inter-office notepaper; telephone calls were to be cut down; posters were pasted to corridor walls calling for a minimum use of electricity. Unfortunately, in the midst of this campaign, a new car which had been on order for four years was delivered to Sir Michael. Characteristically, he was so shamed by this that he apologized to everyone he chanced to meet around the studio. "I'm sorry about this," Balcon said wryly in each case, "but I've had my crisis car on order a long time. It *would* turn up just now!"

As a result of Balcon's insistence on economy during a period when many British producers did little about soaring costs, Ealing has been one of the few companies in the country which has been kept in continuous production through the several film crises since the war. So deeply did Sir Michael impress his views on his team that at least one of his directors, Robert Hamer—who had been responsible for *Kind Hearts and Coronets*—spent some time in reducing costs on paper to the lowest possible denominator. "Time on the floor costs us 1s. 4d. per second," he was once overheard saying to an Ealing worker. "As cinema seats bring us in an average of 4d. each, every second we delay means we must get four more customers into the cinemas to pay for it." Balcon had made his point well.

His achievements during the war and postwar years had, indeed, impressed more than his associates at Ealing. In the New Year's Honours List of 1948, Balcon's name was listed among those to be granted a knighthood by the King, but when he attended a film dinner shortly afterwards, he had not yet been to Buckingham Palace. A speaker at the head table finished his talk. "I will now turn to Mr. Balcon," he said. "Or should it be Sir Michael?"

"It's still mister," Balcon replied, and added in film-making terminology: "I've been shot—but I'm still waiting for the dubbing process."

Puzzled By His Own Films

In recent years, the studios at Ealing have earned the reputation of turning out a certain kind of comedy which has been labelled, even by the man-in-the-street, as an "Ealing comedy." Balcon is pleased about this, and a little puzzled. "I must admit we never set out consciously to create a school of comedy," he said to a television audience some time ago. "Like Topsy, 'it just growed.'"

This more or less sudden birth came about when Henry Cornelius, then an Ealing producer, got the idea of having a gang of boys virtually taking over London for a day. "Can you think of a story to get us to that situation?" Balcon asked T. E. B. Clarke. Clarke wrote a script and, as is usual at Ealing, it was passed around for comments. A critical storm virtually split the studio. "I love the story," script department chief Angus MacPhail said to Balcon, "but I don't think it's box office."

"It won't work," Douglas Slocombe, the cameraman tentatively assigned to the job said gloomily. One cutter even threatened to quit the studio if the picture was made. Troubled, Balcon called Cornelius and Charles Crichton, the director, into his office. "I'm in two minds about this," he told them rather anxiously, "but if you have the courage to go ahead with

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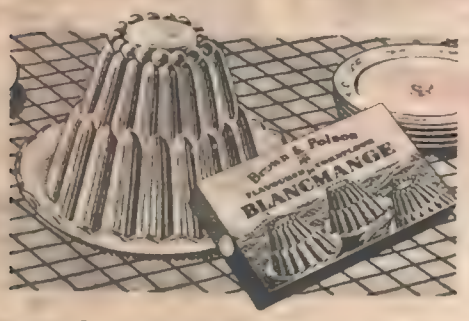

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it, I'll support you." Cornelius insisted that the story would make a wonderful film; and Crichton agreed. They made it. *Hue and Cry*, the first of the "different" Ealing comedies, was the result, and its success set the pattern for other outstanding comedies that have ranged from *Passport to Pimlico* to *The Lavender Hill Mob*.

Recently, Balcon explained what it is that the Ealing comedies have in common. "The people in them do the things we all want to do and can't in this regimented world," he said. "We all want to kick the boss, or steal a million quid, or bump off horrible relatives that stand between us and a fortune. None of us does these things, but it's a lot of fun seeing others doing them. And if the people are real and recognizable, then it's a lot more fun because we can identify ourselves and our neighbours with the various characters, and our daydreams come to life before our eyes."

Comedies, however, are only a part of the Ealing programme of about five films a year. Most of Balcon's more serious pictures are produced after much thought and long preparation, but now and then they seem to come into being by chance. During the war, Harry Watt, an Ealing director, saw an article in a newspaper which told of a group of Australians who had been left behind on an island and who continued to fight the Japanese by using guerrilla tactics. He thought there might be an exciting film based on this and suggested it to Balcon. "All right," the producer said after some thought, "go off to Australia for three months and investigate it."

Thus *The Overlanders*

Unfortunately, that story didn't pan out, but Watt was called upon by the Australian Ministry of Food for advice in the making of a propaganda film. A civil servant remarked: "Why, we do all sorts of things. In 1942, for instance, we brought 100,000 head of cattle across Australia." Watt pounced on him for more details. Then he cabled Balcon: ARE YOU INTERESTED IN FILM OF TREKKING 100,000 HEAD OF CATTLE ACROSS AUSTRALIA?

Next day, he had a reply. SOUNDS VERY INTERESTING. GO AHEAD AND INVESTIGATE. BALCON. Watt went ahead. *The Overlanders*, the result of his work, was judged one of the best films of the year.

Watt, a big, bluff, grey-haired man, has what some consider to be the most enviable job in films. He has specialized in themes which include the broad sweep of an outdoors background, and his search for film subjects has taken him to many fascinating parts of the world. He has sought ideas in Burma, China, Siam, Africa, Portugal and Australia. Thus he is often far from home and alone, and pours out his troubles to Balcon in letters to Ealing. Sir Michael usually writes back in avuncular style.

"I've got plenty of confidence in you, Harry," he wrote once. "What the hell are you worrying about?" Later, in the same letter, his tone changed. "It's about time you got a story. The directors of the company are asking, 'What's happened to Harry Watt?'"

But, by and large, as he does with all his top talent, Balcon gives Watt his head. "When I begin to get cables from Mick at two bob a word beginning, 'Dear Harry'," Watt once said, "then I know it's time to come home, and with the goods."

Balcon And A Painting

On other less important matters, Balcon has found it harder to make up his mind. Once, Monja Danichewsky, one of his producers, answered his office telephone to find an agitated Sir Michael on the other end of the line. "Danny," Balcon urged, "will you come over to my office at once?"

Wondering what calamity had occurred, Danichewsky raced across the lot and arrived, puffing, to find Balcon seated worriedly at his limed, glass-topped desk. He was gazing at a modern painting propped up in front of him. "Do I like that painting or don't I?" the Ealing production chief demanded.

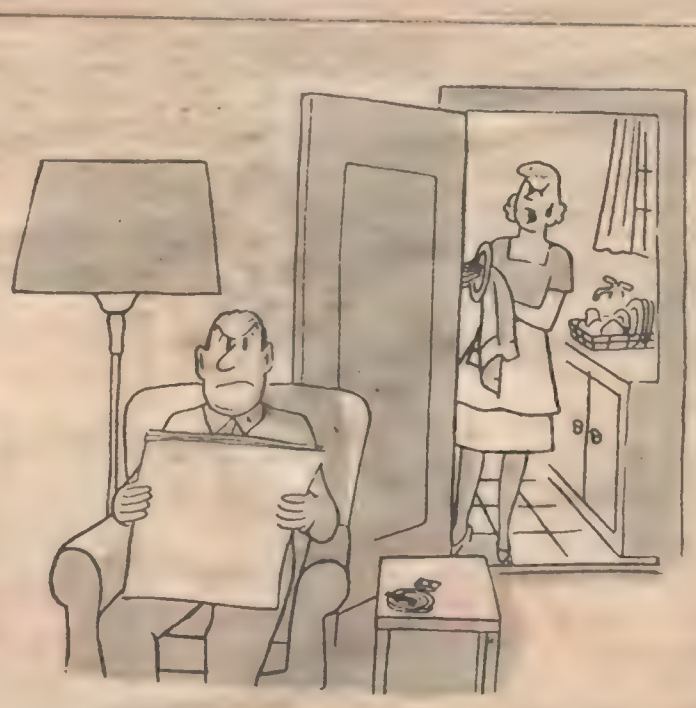
Danichewsky, considerably relieved, looked at it. "No," he replied. "I don't think you do."

Balcon sighed happily. "Thank you very much, old man," he said. "In that case, I won't buy it."

Sir Michael, now undoubtedly the most powerful man in British films, often looks nervously back over his shoulder at the failures sprinkled along the path of his long career. "The producer's defence mechanism is always coming into play," he said recently, in reference to his own attitude. "If he is a good producer, every goose has to be a swan. He makes a lot of indifferent pictures and lots that are downright bad. His defence mechanism is that every man's hand is against him. An exhibitor is never right . . . the publicity was lousy . . . the release date was wrong . . . I suppose this attitude makes him feel better."

Then he switched to the first person singular. "I love success," he admitted with a wry smile, "but I know from experience that failure is always round the corner."

THE END



"Well, maybe you pay the bills around here, but if it weren't for me there wouldn't be any bills to pay!"

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IF your bedroom door starts rattling when a gale blows up in the night, there's a simple way of quietening it without much lost sleep.

Put a wide rubber band round the outside handle, and slip the other end round the inside handle. This will effectively stop the row until the morning, when you can adjust the slot in the door jamb and make a permanent job of it.—Thomas Wilder, Leicester.

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THEY DO IT WITH MIRRORS

Continued from page 12

Marple added: "I hope you don't mind."

"*I* don't mind. I think it's a very good idea. Does Mr. Serrocold know just how well qualified you are for the post?"

"I don't quite understand, Inspector."

"I see. He thinks you're just a very nice elderly lady who was at school with his wife." He shook his head at her. "We know you're a bit more than that, Miss Marple, aren't you? Crime is right down your street. Superintendent Blacker told me about you last night. Well, now, let's have your point of view. Who's been secretly and systematically poisoning Mrs. Serrocold?"

"Well," said Miss Marple judicially, "one is always inclined, human nature being what it is, to think of the husband. Or if it's the other way round, the wife. That's the first assumption, don't you think, in a poisoning case?"

"I agree with you every time," said Inspector Curry.

"But really—in this case——" Miss Marple shook her head. "No, frankly—I cannot seriously consider Mr. Serrocold. Because, you see, Inspector, he really is devoted to his wife."

"To say nothing of the fact that he wouldn't have any motive. She's made over her money to him already. Anyway, he couldn't have killed Gulbrandsen. It seems to me that there's no doubt that the one thing hinges on the other. Whoever is poisoning Mrs. Serrocold killed Gulbrandsen to prevent him spilling the beans. What we've got to get at now is who had an opportunity to kill Gulbrandsen last night. And our prize suspect—there's no doubt about it—is young Walter Hudd. It was he who switched on a reading lamp which resulted in a fuse going, thereby giving him the opportunity to leave the hall and go to the fuse box. It was during his absence from the great hall that the shot was heard. So that's suspect number one perfectly placed for committing the crime."

"And suspect number two?" asked Miss Marple.

"Suspect number two is Alex Restarick, who was alone in his car between the lodge and the house and took too long getting there."

"Anybody else?" Miss Marple leaned forward eagerly—remembering to add: "It's very kind of you to tell me all this."

"It's not kindness," said Inspector Curry. "I've got to have your help. You put your finger on the spot when you said 'Anybody else?' Because there I've got to depend on *you*. You were there in the hall last night, and you can tell me who left it. . . ."

Miss Marple said doubtfully: "Well, I don't know. You see, we were all really very frightened. Mr. Lawson looked—he really did—quite demented. He was shouting, you know, and saying the most terrible things—we could hear them quite plainly—and what with that and with most of the lights being out, I didn't really notice anything else."

"You mean that while that scene was going on, anybody could have slipped out of the hall, gone along the corridor, shot Mr. Gulbrandsen and slipped back again?"

"I think it would have been possible."

"Could you say definitely that anybody was in the great hall the whole time?"

MISS MARPLE considered. "I could say that Mrs. Serrocold was, because I was watching her. She was sitting quite close to the study door, and she never moved from her seat. It surprised me, you know, that she was able to remain so calm."

"And the others?"

"Miss Bellever went out, but I think—I am almost sure—that that was *after* the shot. Mrs. Strete? I really don't know. She was sitting behind me, you see. Gina was over by the far window. I think she remained there the whole time but of course I cannot be sure. Stephen was at the piano. He stopped playing when the quarrel began to get heated."

"We mustn't be misled by the time you heard the shot," said Inspector Curry. "That's a trick that's been done before now, you know. Fake up a shot so as to fix the time of a crime, and fix it wrong. If Miss Bellever had cooked up something of that kind—far-fetched, but you never know—then she'd leave as she did, openly, after the shot was heard. No, we can't go by the shot. The limits are from when Christian Gulbrandsen left the hall to the moment when Miss Bellever found him dead, and we can only eliminate those people who were known not to have had an opportunity. That gives us Lewis Serrocold and young Edgar Lawson in the study, and Mrs. Serrocold in the hall. It's very unfortunate, of course, that Gulbrandsen should be shot on the same evening that this schemozzle happened between Serrocold and this young Lawson."

"Just unfortunate, you think?" murmured Miss Marple.

"Oh? What do you think?"

"It occurred to me," murmured Miss Marple, "that it might have been contrived."

"So that's your idea?"

"Well, everybody seems to think it very odd that Edgar Lawson should quite suddenly have a relapse, so to speak. He'd got this curious complex, or whatever the term is, about his unknown father. Winston Churchill and Viscount Montgomery—all quite likely in his state of mind. Just any famous

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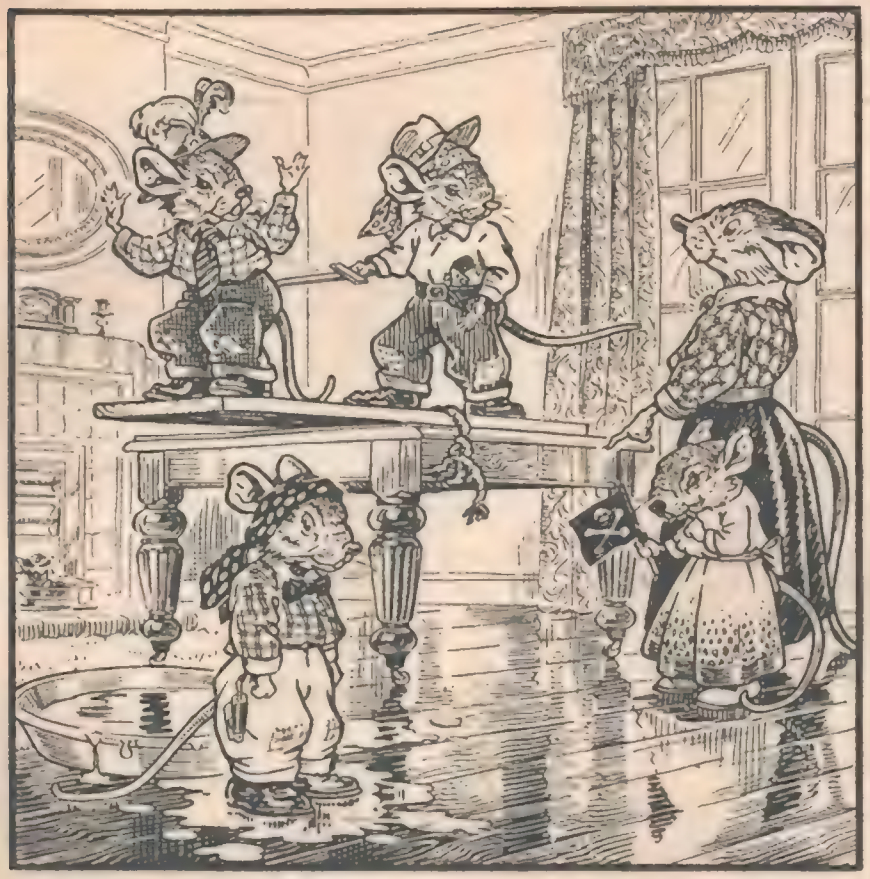

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man he happened to think of. But suppose somebody puts it into his head that it's Lewis Serrocold who is really his father, that it's Lewis Serrocold who has been persecuting him, that he ought by rights to be the Crown Prince, as it were, of Stonygates. In his weak mental state he'll accept the idea, work himself up into a frenzy, and sooner or later will make the kind of scene he did make. And what a wonderful cover that will be! Everybody will have their attention fixed on the dangerous situation that is developing, especially if somebody has thoughtfully supplied him with a revolver."

"H'm, yes. Walter Hudd's revolver."

"Oh, yes," said Miss Marple. "I'd thought of that. But you know Walter is uncommunicative and he's certainly sullen and ungracious, but I don't really think he's stupid."

"So you don't think it's Walter?"

"I think everybody would be very relieved if it *was* Walter. That sounds very unkind, but it's because he is an outsider."

"What about his wife?" asked Inspector Curry. "Would she be relieved?"

Miss Marple did not answer. She was thinking of Gina and Stephen Restarick standing together as she had seen them on her first day. And she thought of the way Alex Restarick's eyes had gone straight to Gina as he had entered the hall last night. What was Gina's own attitude?

Two hours later, Inspector Curry tilted back his chair, stretched himself and sighed. "Well," he said, "we've cleared a good deal of ground."

Sergeant Lake agreed. "The servants are out," he said. "They were together all through the critical period—those that sleep here. The ones that don't live in had gone home."

Curry nodded. He was suffering from mental fatigue. He had interviewed physiotherapists, members of the teaching staff, and what he called to himself the "two young lags" whose turn it had been to dine with the family that night. All their stories dovetailed and checked. He could write them off. He had kept Dr. Maverick, who was, as far as he could judge, the chief person in charge of the Institute, to the end.

"We'll have him in now, Lake."

So the young doctor bustled in, neat and spruce and rather inhuman-looking behind his pince-nez.

Maverick confirmed the statements of his staff, and agreed with Curry's findings.

"Now, as regards your own movements, Dr. Maverick. Can you give me an account of them?"

"Certainly. I have jotted them down for you with the approximate times."

Dr. Maverick had left the great hall at fifteen minutes past nine with Mr. Lacy and Dr. Baumgarten. They had gone to Dr. Baumgarten's rooms where they had all three remained discussing certain courses of treatment until Miss Bellever had come hurrying in and asked Dr. Maverick to go to the great hall. That was at approximately half past nine. He had gone at once to the hall and had found Edgar Lawson in a state of collapse.

Inspector Curry stirred a little. "Just a minute, Dr. Maverick. Is this young man, in your opinion, definitely a mental case?"

Dr. Maverick gave an annoying, superior smile. "We are all mental cases, Inspector Curry."

Tomfool answer, thought the inspector. He knew quite well he wasn't a mental case, whatever Dr. Maverick might be!

"Is he responsible for his actions?"

"Perfectly."

"Then when he fired that revolver at Mr. Serrocold, it was definitely attempted murder."

"No, no, Inspector Curry. Nothing of *that* kind. Lawson had no intention of doing him any harm. He is very fond of Mr. Serrocold."

"It seems a curious way of showing it."

Dr. Maverick smiled again. Inspector Curry found that smile very trying.

"I think I'd like to see this young man," he said.

"Certainly, if you wish. His outburst last night has had a cathartic effect. There is a great improvement today. Mr. Serrocold will be very pleased."

Inspector Curry stared hard at him, but Dr. Maverick was serious as always. Curry sighed. "Do you have any arsenic?" he asked.

"Arsenic?" The question took Dr. Maverick by surprise. It was clearly unexpected. "What a very curious question. Why arsenic?"

"Just answer the question, please."

"No, I have no arsenic of any kind in my possession."

"But you have some drugs?"

"Oh, certainly. Sedatives—morphia, the barbiturates. The usual things."

"Do you attend Mrs. Serrocold?"

"No. Dr. Gunter, of Market Kimble, is the family physician. I hold a medical degree, of course, but I practise purely as a psychiatrist."

"I see. Well, thank you very much, Dr. Maverick."

As Dr. Maverick went out, Inspector Curry murmured to Lake that psychiatrists gave him a pain in the neck.

"We'll get on to the family now," he said. "I'll see young Walter Hudd first."

WALTER HUDD'S attitude was cautious. He seemed to be studying the police officer with a slightly wary expression. But he was quite co-operative.

There was a good deal of defective wiring in Stonygates—the whole electric system was very old-fashioned. They wouldn't stand for a system like that in the States. The fuse which controlled most of the lights in the great hall had blown and he had gone out to the fuse-box to see about it. In due course he got it repaired and came back.

"How long were you away?"

"Why, that I couldn't say for sure. The fuse-box is in an awkward place. I had to get steps and a candle. I was maybe ten minutes—perhaps a quarter of an hour."

"Did you hear a shot?"

"Why, no, I didn't hear anything like that. There are double doors through to the kitchen quarters and one of them is lined with a kind of felt."

"I see. And when you came back into the hall, what did you see?"

"They were all crowded round the door into Mr. Serrocold's study. Mrs. Strete said that Mr. Serrocold had been shot—but actually that wasn't so. Mr. Serrocold was quite all right. The boob had missed him."

"You recognized the revolver?"

"Sure I recognized it! It was mine."

"When did you see it last?"

"Two or three days ago."

"Where did you keep it?"

"In the drawer in my room."

"Who knew that you kept it

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Getting together

IT'S not difficult to get on with people if we would only realize that the problems that arise can nearly always be solved by an attitude of mutual help. This involves understanding the other person's point of view. You don't have to agree—but you do have to comprehend.

Comprehension is better than conflict. Conflict only creates further problems. If you wish to understand others, look into your own heart.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

"Simpson is the only member of this discussion group who never loses his temper—and he never speaks!"

there?" the inspector asked quietly.

"I wouldn't know who knows what in this house."

"What do you mean by that, Mr. Hudd?"

"Aw, they're all nuts!"

"Yes. Quite. But have you any idea who could have killed Mr. Gulbrandsen?"

"I'd say your best bet was Alex Restarick."

"Why do you say that?"

"He had the opportunity. He drove up through the grounds alone in his car."

"And why should he kill Christian Gulbrandsen?"

Walter shrugged his shoulders. "I'm a stranger. I don't know the family set-ups. Maybe the old boy had heard something about Alex and was going to spill the beans to the Serrocolds."

"With what result?"

"They might cut off the dough. He can use dough—uses a good deal of it by all accounts."

"You mean in theatrical enterprises?"

"Is that what he calls it?"

"Do you suggest it was otherwise?"

Again Walter Hudd shrugged his shoulders. "I wouldn't know," he said.

ALEX RESTARICK was voluble. He also gesticulated with his hands. "I know, I know! I'm the ideal suspect. I drive down here alone, and on the way to the house, I get a creative fit. I can't expect you to understand. How should you?"

"I might," Curry put in dryly, but Alex Restarick swept on.

"It's just one of those things! They come upon you, there's no knowing when or how. An effect, an idea—and everything else goes to the winds. I'm producing *Limehouse Nights* next month. Suddenly, last night, the set-up was wonderful . . . the perfect lighting, fog, with the headlights cutting through it and being thrown back, and reflecting dimly a tall pile of buildings. Everything helped! The shots, the running footsteps, and the chug-chugging of the electric power engine—could have been a launch on the Thames."

Inspector Curry broke in. "You heard shots? Where?"

"Out of the fog, Inspector." Alex waved his hands in the air—plump, well-kept hands. "Out of the fog. That was the wonderful part about it."

"It didn't occur to you that anything was wrong?"

"Wrong? Why should it?"

"Are shots such a usual occurrence?"

"Ah, I knew you wouldn't understand ! The shots fitted into the scene I was creating. I *wanted* shots. Danger—opium—crazy business. What did I care what they were really?"

"How many shots?"

"I don't know," said Alex petulantly. "Two or three. Two close together. I do remember that."

Inspector Curry nodded. "And the sound of running footsteps, I think you said? Where were they?"

"They came to me out of the fog. Somewhere near the house."

Inspector Curry said gently: "That would suggest that the murderer of Christian Gulbrandsen came from *outside*."

"Of course. Why not? You don't really suggest, do you, that he came from inside the house?"

Inspector Curry did not answer. Instead, he asked quietly: "Do you take any interest in poisons, Mr. Restarick?"

"In poisons? My dear man, he was surely not poisoned first and shot afterwards. That would be too madly detective story."

"He was not poisoned. But you haven't answered my question."

"Poison has a certain appeal. It has not the crudeness of the revolver bullet or the blunt weapon. I have no special knowledge of the subject, if that is what you mean."

"Have you ever had arsenic in your possession?"

"Frankly," said Alex Restarick, "I have never given much thought to arsenic. One extracts it from weed-killer or flypapers, I believe."

"How often are you down here, Mr. Restarick?"

"It varies, Inspector. Sometimes not for several weeks. But I try to get down for weekends whenever I can. I always regard Stonygates as my true home."

"Mrs. Serrocold has encouraged you to do so?"

"What I owe Mrs. Serrocold can never be repaid. Sympathy, understanding, affection——"

"And quite a lot of solid cash as well, I believe?"

Alex looked faintly disgusted. "She treats me as a son, and she has belief in my work."

"Has she ever spoken to you about her will?"

"Certainly. But may I ask what is the point of all these questions, Inspector? There is nothing wrong with Mrs. Serrocold."

"There had better not be," said Inspector Curry grimly.

"Now what can you possibly mean by that?"

"If you don't know, so much the better," said Inspector Curry. "And if you do—I'm warning you."

When Alex had gone out, Sergeant Lake said: "Pretty bogus, would you say?"

Curry shook his head. "Difficult to say. He may have genuine creative talent. He may just like living soft and talking big. One doesn't know. Heard running footsteps, did he? I'd be prepared to bet he made that up."

"For any particular reason?"

"Definitely for a particular reason. We haven't come to it yet, but we will."

"After all, sir, one of those smart lads may have got out of the college

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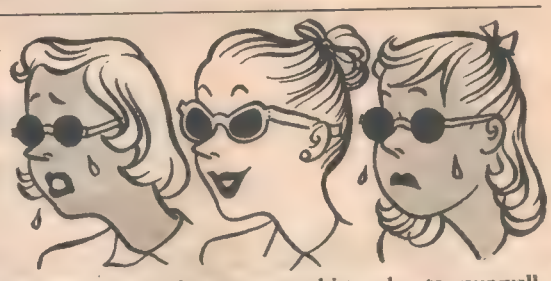

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buildings unbeknown. Probably a few cat burglars among them, and if so——"

"That's what we're meant to think. Very convenient. But if that's so, Lake, I'll eat my new soft hat."

Stephen Restarick, the next person to be questioned, said: "I was at the piano. I'd been strumming softly when the row blew up between Lewis and Edgar."

"What did you think of it?"

"Well—to tell the truth I didn't really take it seriously. The poor beggar has these fits of venom. He's not really loopy, you know. All this nonsense is a kind of blowing off steam. The truth is, we all get under his skin—particularly Gina, of course."

"Gina? You mean Mrs. Hudd? Why does she get under his skin?"

"Because she's a woman—and a beautiful woman, and because she thinks he's funny! She's half Italian, you know, and the Italians have that unconscious vein of cruelty. They've no compassion for anyone who's old or ugly, or peculiar in any way. They point with their fingers and jeer. That's what Gina did, metaphorically speaking. She'd no use for young Edgar. He was ridiculous, pompous, and at bottom fundamentally unsure of himself. He wanted to impress, and he only succeeded in looking silly. It wouldn't mean anything to her that the poor fellow suffered a lot."

"Are you suggesting that Edgar Lawson is in love with Mrs. Hudd?" asked Inspector Curry.

Stephen replied cheerfully: "Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, we all are, more or less! She likes us that way."

"Does her husband like it?"

"He takes a dim view. He suffers, too, poor fellow. The thing can't last, you know. Their marriage, I mean. It will break up before long. It was just one of these war affairs."

"This is all very interesting," said the inspector, "but we're getting away from our subject, which is the murder of Christian Gulbrandsen."

"Quite," said Stephen. "But I can't tell you anything about it. I sat at the piano, and I didn't leave the piano until dear Jolly came in with some rusty old keys and tried to fit one to the lock of the study door."

"You stayed at the piano. Did you continue to play the piano?"

"No, I stopped playing when the tempo rose. Not that I had any doubts as to the outcome. Lewis has what I can only describe as a dynamic eye. He could easily break up Edgar just by looking at him."

"Indeed. Can you tell me, Mr. Restarick, who left the hall yesterday evening while you were there—during the relevant time?"

"Wally—to fix the lights. Juliet Bellever to find a key to fit the study door. Nobody else, as far as I know."

"Would you have noticed if somebody did?"

STEPHEN considered. "Probably not. That is, if they just tiptoed out and back again. It was so dark in the hall—and there was the fight to which we were all listening avidly."

"Is there anyone you are sure *was* there the whole time?"

"Mrs. Serrocold—yes, and Gina. I'd swear to them."

"Thank you, Mr. Restarick."

Stephen went towards the door. Then he hesitated and came back. "What's all this," he said, "about arsenic?"

"Who mentioned arsenic to you?"

"My brother."

"Ah—yes."

Stephen said: "Has somebody been giving Mrs. Serrocold arsenic?"

"Why should you mention Mrs. Serrocold?"

"I've read of the symptoms of arsenical poisoning. Peripheral neuritis, isn't it? It would square more or less with what she's been suffering from lately. And then Lewis snatching away her tonic last night."

"Who, in your opinion, would be likely to administer arsenic to Mrs. Serrocold?"

For a moment a grin appeared upon Stephen Restarick's handsome face. "Not the usual person. You can wash out the husband. Lewis Serrocold's got nothing to gain. And also he worships that woman. He can't bear her to have an ache in her little finger."

"Who then? Have you any idea?"

"Oh, yes. I'd say it was a certainty."

"Explain, please."

Stephen shook his head. "It's a certainty psychologically speaking. Not in any other way. No evidence of any kind. And you probably wouldn't agree."

Stephen Restarick went out nonchalantly, and Inspector Curry drew cats on the sheet of paper in front of him.

He was thinking three things. (*a*) that Stephen Restarick thought a good deal of himself; (*b*) that Stephen Restarick and his brother presented a united front, and (*c*) that Stephen Restarick was a handsome man where Walter Hudd was a plain one.

He wondered about two other things—what Stephen meant by "psychologically speaking," and whether Stephen could possibly have seen Gina from his seat at the piano. He rather thought not.

INTO the Gothic gloom of the library, Gina brought an exotic glow. Even Inspector Curry blinked a little at the radiant young woman who sat down, leaned forward over the table and said expectantly, "Well?"

Inspector Curry, observing her scarlet shirt and dark green slacks, said dryly: "I see you're not wearing mourning, Mrs. Hudd."

"I haven't got any," said Gina. "I know everyone is supposed to have a little black number and wear it with pearls. But I don't. I hate black. I think it's hideous, and only receptionists and housekeepers and people like that ought to wear it. Anyway, Christian Gulbrandsen wasn't really a relation. He's my grandmother's stepson."

"And I suppose you didn't know him very well?"

Gina shook her head. "He came here three or four times when I was a child, but then in the war I went to America, and I only came back here to live about six months ago."

"You have definitely come back to live? You're not just on a visit?"

"I haven't really thought," said Gina.

"This scene last night, Mrs. Hudd. Who was in the great hall while it was going on?"

"Oh, we were all there. Except Uncle Christian, of course."

"Not *all*, Mrs. Hudd. People went in and out."

"Did they?" asked Gina vaguely.

"Your husband, for instance, went out to fix the lights."

"Yes. Wally's great at fixing things."

"During his absence a shot was heard, I understand. A shot that you all thought came from the park?"

"I don't remember that . . . oh, yes, it was just after the lights had

"Mother!—I'm old enough to do things for myself now"

come on again and Wally had come back."

"Did anyone else leave the hall?"

"I don't think so. I don't remember."

"Where were you sitting, Mrs. Hudd?"

"Over by the window."

"Near the door to the library?"

"Yes."

"Did you yourself leave the hall at all?"

"Leave? With all the excitement? Of course not."

Gina sounded scandalized by the idea.

"Where were the others sitting?"

"Mostly round the fireplace, I think. Aunt Mildred was knitting and so was Aunt Jane—Miss Marple, I mean—and Grandam was just sitting."

"And Mr. Stephen Restarick?"

"Stephen? He was playing the piano to begin with. I don't know where he went later."

"And Miss Bellever?"

"Fussing about as usual.. She practically never sits down. She was looking for keys or something." She said suddenly: "What's all this about Grandam's tonic? Did the chemist make a mistake in making it up or something?"

"Why should you think that?"

"Because the bottle's disappeared and Jolly's been fussing round madly looking for it, in no end of a stew. Alex told her the police had taken it away. Did you?"

Instead of replying to the question, Inspector Curry said: "Miss Bellever was upset, you say?"

"Oh, Jolly always fusses," said Gina carelessly. "She likes fussing. Sometimes I wonder how Grandam can stand it."

"Just one last question, Mrs. Hudd. You've no ideas yourself as to who killed Christian Gulbrandsen?"

"One of the queers did it, I should think. The thug ones are really quite sensible. I mean, they only cosh people so as to rob a till or get money or jewellery—not just for fun. But one of the queers—you know, what they call mentally maladjusted—might do it for fun, don't you think? Because I can't see what other reason there could be for killing Uncle Christian except fun, do you? At least I don't mean fun, exactly—but——"

"You can't think of a motive?"

"Yes, that's what I mean," said Gina gratefully. "He wasn't robbed or anything, was he?"

"But you know, Mrs. Hudd, the college buildings were locked and barred. Nobody could get out from there without a pass."

"Don't you believe it," Gina laughed merrily. "Those boys could get out from anywhere! They've taught me a lot of tricks."

"She's a lively one," said Lake when Gina had departed. "First time I've seen her close to. Lovely figure, hasn't she? Sort of a foreign figure, if you know what I mean."

Inspector Curry threw him a cold glance. Sergeant Lake said hastily that she was a merry one. "Seems to have enjoyed it all, as you might say."

"Whether Stephen Restarick is right or not about her marriage breaking up, I notice that she went out of her way to mention that Walter Hudd was back in the great hall *before* that shot was heard."

"Which according to everyone else, isn't so?"

"Exactly."

"She didn't mention Miss Bellever leaving the hall to look for keys, either."

"No," said the inspector thoughtfully, "she didn't. . . ."

MRS. STRETE fitted into the library very much better than Gina Hudd had done. There was nothing exotic about Mrs. Strete. She wore black with an onyx brooch, and she wore a hair net over carefully arranged grey hair. She looked, Inspector Curry reflected, exactly as the relict of a canon of the Established Church should look—which was almost odd, because so few people ever did look like what they really were.

Even the tight line of her lips had an ascetic, ecclesiastical flavour. She expressed Christian endurance and possibly Christian fortitude. But not, Curry thought, Christian charity. Moreover, it was clear that Mrs. Strete was offended.

"I should have thought that you could have given me some idea of when you would want me, Inspector. I have been forced to sit around waiting all the morning."

It was, Curry judged, her sense of importance that was hurt. He hastened to pour oil on the troubled waters.

"I'm very sorry, Mrs. Strete. Perhaps you don't quite know how we set about these things. We start, you know, with the less important evidence—get it out of the way, so to speak. It's valuable to keep to the last a person on whose judgment we can rely—a good observer—by whom we can check what has been told us up to date."

Mrs. Strete softened visibly. "Oh, I see. I hadn't quite realized. . . ."

"Now you're a woman of mature judgment, Mrs. Strete. A woman of the world. And then, this is your home—you're the daughter of the house, and you can tell me all about the people who are in it."

"I can certainly do that," said Mildred Strete. "But isn't it perfectly obvious who killed my brother?"

Inspector Curry leant back in his chair. His hand stroked his small, neat moustache. "Well, we have to be careful," he said. "You think it's obvious?"

"Of course. That dreadful American husband of poor Gina's. He's the only stranger here. We know absolutely nothing about him. He's probably one of these dreadful American gangsters."

"But that wouldn't quite account for his killing Christian Gulbrandsen, would it? Why should he?"

"Because Christian had found out something about him. That's what he came here for so soon after his last visit."

"Are you sure of that, Mrs. Strete?"

"Again it seems to me quite obvious. He let it be thought his visit was in connection with the Trust—but that's nonsense. He was here for that only a month ago. And nothing of importance has arisen since. So he must have come on some private business. He saw Walter on his last visit, and he may have recognized him, or perhaps made inquiries about him in the States. My brother Christian wasn't an easy man to deceive. He came here, I'm sure, to settle the whole business—to expose Walter and show him up for what he is. And so, naturally, Walter shot him."

Inspector Curry, adding some outsized whiskers to one of the cats on his blotting-pad, said: "Ye-es."

"Don't you agree with me that that's what *must* have happened?"

"It could be—yes," admitted the inspector. "But until we can prove motive, there's not very much to go upon."

"If you ask me, it's *money* that Walter Hudd is after. That's why he came over here and has settled down living on the Serrocolds. But he can't lay his hands on much until my mother's death, when a very large fortune will come to Gina."

"And to you, Mrs. Strete."

A FAINT colour came into Mildred Strete's cheek. "And to me, as you say. My husband and myself always lived quietly. He spent very little money except on books—he was a great scholar. My own money has almost doubled itself. It is more than enough for my simple needs. Still, one can always use money for benefit of others. Any money that comes to me I shall regard as a sacred trust."

"But it won't be in a trust, will it?" said Curry, wilfully misunderstanding. "It will come to you absolutely."

"Oh, yes—in that sense. Yes, it will be mine absolutely."

Something in the ring of that last word made Inspector Curry raise his head sharply. Mrs. Strete was not looking at him. Her eyes were shining and her long, thin mouth was curved in a triumphant smile.

Inspector Curry said in a considering voice: "So in your view—and of course you've had ample opportunities of judging—Master Walter Hudd wants the money that will come to his wife when Mrs. Serrocold dies. By the way, have you noticed your mother's health failing just lately?"

"She suffers from rheumatism. But then one must have something as one grows older. I've no sympathy with people who make a fuss over inevitable aches and pains."

"Does Mrs. Serrocold make a fuss?"

Mildred Strete was silent for a moment. She said at last: "She does not make a fuss herself, but she is used to being made a fuss of. My stepfather is far too solicitous. And as for Miss Bellever, she makes herself positively ridiculous. Her devotion to my mother, though admirable in itself, has really become somewhat of an affliction. She literally tyrannizes over my mother. She runs the whole house and takes far too much upon herself."

CURRY nodded his head gently. "I see . . . I see. . . ." He watched her speculatively. "There's one thing I don't quite get, Mrs. Strete. The position of the two Restarick brothers."

"More foolish sentiment. Their father married my poor mother for her money. Two years afterwards he ran away with a Jugoslavian singer of the lowest morals. My mother was softhearted enough to be sorry for these two boys. Since it was out of the question for them to spend their holidays with a woman of such notorious morals, she more or less adopted them. They have been hangers-on here ever since. Oh, yes, we've plenty of spongers in this house, I can tell you that."

"Alex Restarick had an opportunity of killing Christian Gulbrandsen. He was in his car alone—driving from the lodge to the house. What about Stephen?"

"Stephen was in the hall with us. I don't approve of Alex Restarick—he is getting to look very coarse and I imagine he leads an irregular life—but I don't really see him as a murderer. Besides, why should he kill my brother?"

"That's what we always come back to, isn't it?" said Inspector Curry genially. "What did Christian Gulbrandsen know about someone that made it necessary for that someone to kill him?"

"Exactly," said Mrs. Strete, flaring into sudden animation. "It *must* be Walter Hudd. Oh, it's wicked—wicked. No one else here really seems to care. Why should they? I'm the only person who was a blood relation to Christian. To mother, he was only a grown-up stepson. To Gina, he isn't really any relation at all. But he was my own brother."

"Half-brother," suggested Inspector Curry.

"Half-brother, yes. But we were both Gulbrandsens in spite of the difference in age."

Curry said gently: "Yes—yes, I see your point. . . ."

Tears in her eyes, Mildred Strete marched out. Curry looked at Lake.

"So she's quite sure it's Walter Hudd," he said. "Won't entertain for a moment the idea of its being anybody else."

"And she may be right."

"She certainly may. Wally fits. Opportunity—and motive. Because if he wants money quick, his wife's mother would have to die. So Wally tampers with her tonic, and Christian Gulbrandsen sees him do it—or hears about it in some way. Yes, it fits very nicely."

He paused and said: "By the way, Mildred Strete likes money. She has a miser's passion for it. Though whether she would commit murder for it. . . ."

"Complex, isn't it?" said Sergeant Lake, and scratched his head.

Inspector Curry said: "Very. But not unpromising. I wonder, Lake, I really wonder. . . . That girl, Gina Hudd, now. She puzzles me more than all the others. Has she a bad memory or is she a terrible little fibber?"

"Probably a bit of both," said Sergeant Lake.

"Probably," said Curry, thoughtfully.

To be continued next week

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

THIS PHOTOGRAPH was taken on one of the two most exciting days of my childhood: I was playing for England's Schoolboy team. The other was when I captained the Elementary Schools against a Public Schools eleven at Lord's—and scored a century.

I have been interested in sport ever since I was a toddler. There is a story in my family that, when I was three, I was booting a ball in Greenwich Park and a stranger in a top hat approached my mother. He lifted it, and said to her: "Madam, I have never seen a boy so young with a kick like that. I should not be surprised if he goes far with a ball in life."

We had no garden to play in where we lived in Hendon, and the park was too far away. So my brother and sister and I used to play in the street.

Almost every weekend, Dad would be mending the neighbours' windows we had smashed during the week. It was lucky he was a carpenter by trade!

When I was twelve it was arranged that I should be given a trial for the London Schools cricket team. I was to meet the chairman of the Association at an Underground station. But when I got there—early, of course—I suddenly remembered I had left my admission ticket at home. I panicked and ran home to get it. By the time I got back to the station, he was gone.

I went home and wept on my bed, for I knew that if a boy let them down—as they thought—once, he did not get a second chance. In fact, my schoolmaster pleaded for two hours on my behalf before he convinced them to make an exception for me.

At fourteen, I was offered a job on the ground staff at Lord's—30s. a week, plus a share of the profits on match cards I sold. But this was only for the summer, and Dad went along to see the manager of our favourite football club to find out whether they would give me a chance in the winter.

When the manager saw me, I think he nearly turned me down on the spot. He said right away: "My word, son, you *are* small. I like my players to be big." I was taken on in the end, however.

Today he is a famous footballer and cricketer. For his name turn to page 31

A DREAM-DRESS *for a girl who loves to dance—this lovely lace creation washes perfectly, in Lux! "I wouldn't dare to trust it to anything else," says Miss Crawford. "Lux keeps it sweet and lovely—and so divinely soft."*

MISS CRAWFORD *believes that washing things in Lux makes them last longer! "Lux keeps all my pretty things as fresh and soft as when they first were new," she says.*

LX 3049-50

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Anne Crawford

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She keeps her pretty things soft and sweet with Lux!

ANNE CRAWFORD has that fine Scots beauty of cornsilk hair and fabulous skin which in other times would have touched-off a Border feud or inspired a ballad. Before the cameras she dresses simply, and in key with her quiet, thoughtful acting, but off-stage she takes the *American* view of fashion; basic fashion-lines and fine fabrics are her delight.

Here, she is wearing an evening dress with all the ballet-magic of "Sylphides" within its skirt. A foam of lace swirls to her feet, a tightly fashioned bodice is softened by lilac and lilies-of-the-valley. "This is my best-loved dress," says Miss Crawford. "I wouldn't dream of trusting it to anything but Lux. Lux is so mild and safe, I use it for all my most precious things—my cherished fine wool tartans, too. It really does them good!"

Miss Crawford shares this fashion secret with many lovely stars who keep their pretty clothes soft with Lux. Lux is as safe as baby soap—it contains no soda or harsh chemicals at all to spoil the lovely *feel* of fabrics. Your hands, too, stay so soft and white. You'll find the new Magnum-size Lux is a really marvellous investment—it will last you simply ages and save shopping time as well. You'll notice, too, how much more washing you can do with Lux than you can with other washing products—it's a real economy! In three sizes: try some today.

THE CRAWFORD TARTAN *is a lovely blend of reds and greens—enchanting with Miss Crawford's honey-coloured hair. Here, she is wearing it made up into a skirt and waistcoat, sporting underneath a wide-sleeved Byronic shirt. Because they are vegetable-dyed, her tartan fine wool things wash wonderfully. Lux keeps them soft, so soft!*

THE MAN ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Continued from page 17

the situation, that whoever else might fail, he would not.

They got Johnny down to the col, shortly after midday. But Mortimor, who was the doctor among them, thought that even the col was too high for Johnny in the condition he was in, and expressed the opinion that he ought to go lower.

Harrington looked up at the mountain, dazzling white against the clear blue sky. "You take him down," he said to Mortimor. "Bruno and I can tackle this. Leave a couple of the porters here. Come back the day after tomorrow. By then we'll either have beaten it, or failed again." The tone of his voice wasn't that of a man who proposed to fail again.

Before they parted, Harrington said: "God help you, Mortimor, if that route of yours is no good!" He said it jokingly, and they all laughed. Then they went their separate ways, Bruno and Harrington up the ridge again, Johnny and Mortimor with three of the porters down towards the Base Camp.

By sundown, when the glacier thousands of feet below had become a pool of darkness, and the sun struck fire only from a few of the highest peaks around them, Bruno had begun to be irritated by Harrington. He was irritated by his efficiency, by the speed at which he worked, by his calm assumption that, with the help of Mortimor's route, nothing now lay between them and success. He was irritated by the way he joked about their lukewarm tea—the boiling-point of water at 23,000 feet is very low, and it's almost impossible to get a decent cup of tea. Presently he was irritated most of all by the way he rolled up in his sleeping-bag and, almost on the instant, was asleep.

BRUNO sat in the tent, listening to Harrington's agonized breathing. At great altitudes one does not breathe normally in sleep, but in a way which, lower down, is associated only with people who are dying. Short bursts of increasingly violent panting, which sound as though the sleeper is suffocating, rise to a crescendo, and then suddenly stop, so that it seems for a moment as though the sleeper has actually died. Then it begins all over again.

It got on Bruno's nerves. He stuck it for a while, and then he felt that he could not stand it any longer. Half-rising to his feet, he stooped out of the entrance of the tent.

Outside, everything was still. Still as the grave, Bruno thought. Still as nothingness. The air was icy cold, searing his lungs each time he took a breath. Below him was the void. About him, the snow glimmered in the starlight, but the stars were not the warm, golden stars of his Surrey home; rather they were dazzling pin-points of electric blue. For Bruno, there was menace in that stillness.

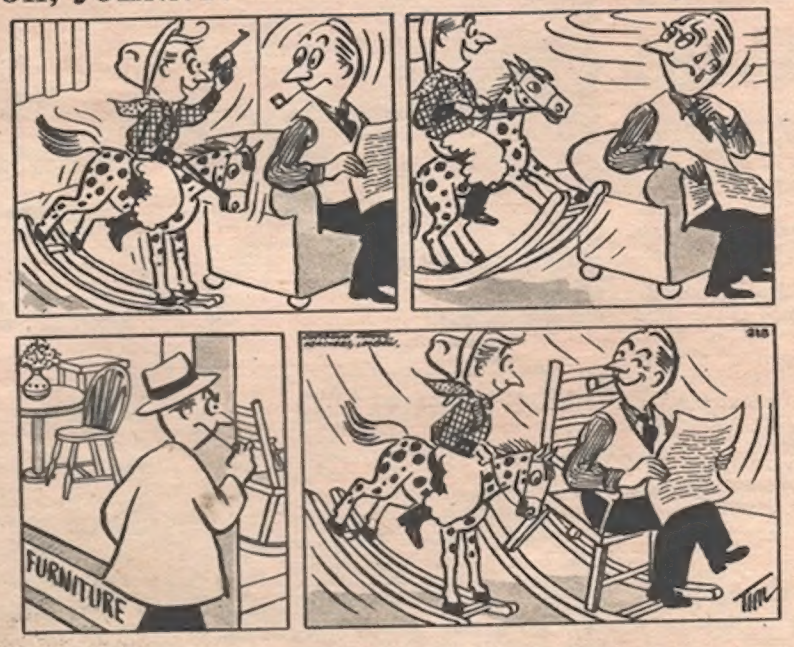
He found himself beginning to shiver. It seemed to him that it was the shiver of fear, but perhaps it was only that he was cold. Already he had lost sensation in his feet. If he stood there much longer, he would get himself frost-bitten.

Back in the tent he lit a pipe to steady his nerves, and took off his boots and tried to nurse some life back into the chilled flesh. Harrington had started to snore. He snored as he breathed, the snores rising to a violent crescendo, only to stop and then to start again.

Angrily Bruno made a gesture, and struck the cooker. At the sudden rattle of metal, Harrington stirred. "My God!" he muttered, "are you going to crash about like this all night? And *must* you smoke that filthy thing in a tent of all places?" Then he was asleep again, but at least he had stopped snoring.

Bruno took off his outer clothing and wriggled down into his bag. He put his boots just by the head, where they would get at least some warmth. One of the horrors of high-altitude mountaineering was trying to fight your way

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*



in the morning into boots as stiff as boards. As he lay, the roof of the tent seemed to move. Was the wind rising? It would be unpleasant to be caught where they were in a blizzard. He knew something of the strength of the winds the mountain could produce. It could tear them away like a man picking dandelions. But there was no wind; only that almost imperceptible movement of the canvas.

Bruno fell into a doze. Then the roof of the tent seemed to change colour, and it was morning. He did not need to wake Harrington. Harrington woke as suddenly as he had gone to sleep. Presently he was getting dressed, cursing and swearing at his boots. Then he was outside collecting snow, and soon he was preparing another of the lukewarm drinks, and asking Bruno what he would have to eat. They had brought several luxuries with them—appetites have to be tempted at high altitudes. But Bruno did not feel that he could eat at all. It made him feel sick to see Harrington tucking into sardines—his favourite food, it seemed, on and off the mountains.

Then they were away up the couloir, moving slowly, methodically. It was intensely cold—the sun had not yet reached their side of the mountain—but at least they were free from bombardment by stones. Not for another hour would the ice thaw and release the daily barrage.

Presently they came to the rock face. Harrington grunted his approval. Mortimor's instinct had not played him false. Slanting across the face was a clear route, formed by several faults, the one merging into the other. The ledges were narrow enough, but the rock was uneven, affording handholds, with here and there a knob round which they could belay the rope.

Presently they were off the rock. Above them was a precipitous slope of snow, and at the head of the slope would be the little gully towards which they were making. They tested the snow surface, and it was firm. Bruno drove his ice-axe in, and it was deep. The axe would hold the rope. He took over the lead. At the foot of the slope, Harrington made an anchor. Cautiously, Bruno began the ascent. It was a dizzy pitch. If he slipped, he might well tear both the ice-axe and Harrington from the mountainside. So he must not slip.

It was a long way up; farther than it seemed. But he was heartened, after a few minutes, by the appearance of the sun. Suddenly, so suddenly that it seemed as though someone had switched it on, the rays were flooding across the snow, sparkling in his eyes; and at once he felt the warmth bringing back the circulation to his numbed senses.

Instinctively, he adjusted his snow goggles.

Gradually the gully grew closer. Then he was there. He sat at one side of it, his back against the rock, glorying in the sunshine. The slope of snow curved from his feet for a little distance, and then there was nothingness, until, infinitely remote and far below, he could see the floor of the valley from which the mountain rose. All around him were great peaks, like a wild sea frozen at the height of a hurricane. There was not a cloud in the sky, anywhere, as far as he could see.

He drove his ice-axe deep into the snow below the gully, unwound the rope from his waist and belayed it carefully about the haft just below the head, and then called out to Harrington to come up.

Harrington came, slowly, carefully, confidently. Bruno could hear him for a long time before he could see him. Indeed, it seemed as though he would never appear. But presently the top of his head appeared over the curved horizon of the snow, and then his shoulders, and a minute or two later he was sitting beside Bruno, just where the ice-axe was, his goggled face wreathed in smiles.

"We progress," he said, and drove his ice-axe into the snow at his side with something of a gesture of finality.

And then the mountain struck. With a hiss, a great slab of snow detached itself from the head of the gully and began to slide down the mountainside. Bruno heard the hiss and saw the snow crack beside him, but before he could shout a warning, before he could even open his mouth, it was piling against Harrington's back. He saw Harrington try to turn, saw him clutch frantically at the ice-axe, and then he was gone, buried in the smother of snow—Harrington, the rope, and the two ice-axes, over the curved horizon and out into oblivion.

FOR a moment, Bruno sat stupefied with horror. From beyond the edge of the slope, a white cloud billowed slowly up into the air, hiding the distant hills, and then dissolved.

The hissing sank to a whisper and then ceased. From far below there came a low grumble of sound, like the wakening roar of some beast of prey. There followed a silence, absolute and utter.

Bruno recovered the power of movement, and looked down. The snow had broken away to within a foot of where he was sitting. Then he looked farther, towards the edge over which the avalanche had fallen, and he saw, in place of the deep snow slope up which they had toiled, a sheet of ice, smooth and polished, like the casing of some crystal dome.

Despite the warmth of the sun, his body began to shudder. Slowly and painfully, like the blood returning to a frozen limb, there spread through his numbed senses the realization of his true position.

He was alone, and he was trapped. Between him and the route by which they had come—the *only* route—lay nothing but the smooth and polished ice. Without an ice-axe he could not hold himself upon it for an instant. He would slip, he would slide, and from that slide there could be no recovery.

Down below were Johnny and Hugh Mortimor; but Johnny could not climb and Hugh alone could never reach him before the sun went down, if, indeed, across that wicked slope of polished ice a man could move at all. And once the sun went down there would be cold—bitter, searing cold—and then the numbness, and after that, oblivion.

Now that he was face to face with death, he did not greatly fear it. Perhaps the lack of oxygen was responsible for making him feel so listless, as though nothing mattered very much any more. He thought again of Mortimor, and the pageant of the last few hours passed through his mind until he came to the point where Harrington had said—what was it?—"God help you if that route of yours is no good." How like Harrington to make a remark like that!

And now something flickered in Bruno, flickered and sprang into a flame, dispersing his lethargy. Mortimor! Tomorrow he would come up to where the porters were waiting, and there would be no sign of them. He would think, of course, when they did not come back, that they had fallen; and he would blame himself, blame himself completely for suggesting a route which had exposed them to that danger. That thought—the thought that he had been responsible for their deaths—would be with him till he died. He would not be able to escape from it.

But there was something that Bruno could do to help him there. Perhaps Johnny would recover and the two of them would make the second attempt after all, in an endeavour to find out what had befallen them; or perhaps next year another expedition would come. They would not find him alive, but at least they might find him dead. Struggling, with awkward fingers, he pulled his diary out of his pocket and, with the stub of pencil he always carried, made a record of exactly what had happened. At least it would absolve Mortimor from blame. When he had finished, he put the diary back carefully in his pocket.

HE seemed to have found a new energy. He stood up, but carefully, hanging on to a jutting piece of rock, and looked into the gully.

The avalanche of snow had swept it clear. The bottom was filled with ice, blue and treacherous, but along the walls were many broken places, many small ledges. It looked to him as though a man could work his way without much danger up the rocks along the side of the gully and so out on to the summit of the mountain.

The mountain! The picture of his wife sitting beside the fire at home came vividly into his mind. What had he said. "It won't get *me*—I'm going to get *it*. I'll climb that mountain, if it's the last thing I do." Well, the battle wasn't over yet. He could never beat the mountain now, but at least he could force a draw! He found himself laughing at his own conceit.

He no longer felt afraid. With his new-found energy he started slowly, rhythmically, to make his way up the side of the gully.

He could not calculate how long it took. Suddenly he was there, at the top, looking over to the other side, to the frozen peaks far below him now and the pale, twisted glaciers, and, beyond, to the farthermost horizon, the brown and arid plateau of Tibet.

He sat down. The sun was sinking now. Night seemed to rush up at him out of the valleys. Like silver spears the tips of the mountains seemed to glow for a moment and then, one by one, they disappeared. He sat alone in radiance. Then the cold came, striking at him like a dagger, and all across the sky the stars blazed out.

Later, the moon rose from below the plains, but Bruno did not see it. Sitting there, with his knees clasped in his arms, his head bowed forward, he seemed to be asleep. THE END

WIN a £500 FORTUNE and FLY to SWITZERLAND!

TWO big thrills are waiting to reward you for entering this week's best *Bullet*—a £500 fortune *and* Mystery Holiday for two in Switzerland. First big moment will be the arrival of your £500 cheque to banish money problems for years. The other thrill will come on Sunday, August 31, when you and your holiday companion are airborne in a Viking, off to the Alps, with other *Bullets* winners, for glorious days beside one of Switzerland's most enchanting lakes.

Two readers who each won £500 cheques and such a holiday last year are seen in our picture, taken on lovely Lake Lugano. As perfect a spot awaits *you* this summer if you make good use of that coupon below and post it by Monday, May 19. Before posting your *Bullets*, note this week's new summer attractions in Crosswords—why not send an entry in the same envelope?

Four *Bullets* guests in Switzerland last summer enjoy a lake trip; win your place in the 1952 Party this week!

"BULLETS" 1st PRIZE £500 CASH PLUS 10-DAY SWISS HOLIDAY for TWO

With your chosen companion you fly B.E.A. to Switzerland—your mystery destination, one of the loveliest lakeside resorts amongst the Alps.

Luxurious accommodation and grand all-day Coach Tour to the mighty Rhône Glacier will be provided by JOHN BULL through Cook's. (Cash offer in lieu if winner unable to join Swiss party.)

1,569 OTHER PRIZES

£50, £25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 2 of £5, 10 of £2. 10s., 50 of 10s.

1,500 "GOOD SHOT" AWARDS

FINE FOWL BONUSES

A fine roasting fowl accompanies each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Fortes half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated June 7, and in JOHN BULL dated June 14), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

NOVEL BIG "BRIGHTER HOME" OFFER NEXT WEEK!

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

John Citizen, Hero
On Recovery's Road
German Band
In The Animal World
Ruthless
They May Be Black, But
On The Table
[illegible]
Mr. Know-all
Bright And Breezy
Got It All Right
Still Standing
Back In The Home Guard
Queer Collection
Rejuvenated
Alfie's Motto
Stirred Things Up
At The Works Concert
Beautiful Friendship
Once In A Blue Moon

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

Give Her A ..... And
Though We're .....
Funny Little .....
By The Time It's .....
Copying .....
Made ..... Feel At Home

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,834 (or Xword 786) "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

"Bullets" Winners 1,829

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Riviera Holiday: F. W. Overton, "Pathways," Walesby Lane, New Ollerton, Newark:

Leading World A Dance Of Death, Whirling Electrons

£60: L. K. Budd, 15 Derry Avenue, Seaburn, Sunderland: MAN ON A VOLCANO — BUT STILL CHALLENGES EVEREST!

£30: Mrs. E. Dilger, 38 Gregg House Road, Sheffield: IN NO MOOD FOR SINGING — WHERE THE MISSISSIPPI *Overflows*.

OTHER AWARDS: £10: L. L. Evans, 20 Skelmuir Road, Tremorpa, Cardiff: IN NO MOOD FOR ATTACK—RUSSIA—ENERGY'S "ATTACKED" WEST.

£10: Mrs. J. M. Harbottle, 82 Beresford Road, Portsmouth: MAN ON A GLITTERING—STAGE, *And* "TRAP-DOOR"—BRIDEGROOM! £8: V. M. Bale, 94 Redcatch Road, Knowle, Bristol: MAN ON A PICNIC—WHATEVER'S "IN BASKET," OPTIMIST. £8: J. Kirwan, 14 Princess Street, Wolverhampton: WORKS MIRACLES—HOUSEWIFE—CALLS THEM "CHORES." £8: F. Leggett, 1 Terrace Lane, City Road, Norwich: IN NO MOOD FOR OVERTIME—OFFICIAL—FINISHING DOODLE *Tomorrow*! £8: D. McCormack, 62 Langside Road, Glasgow: CHICKEN FEED—MAYBE, BUT "FEED" MONEY-BOX! £8: H. Shannon, 147 Upper Meadow Street, Belfast: MAN ON A DIET—REDUCING *Joe's* "WEIGHT," JOHN.

For five winners of £6 and five of £4, see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

50 Prizes of 10s. and 2,000 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

NEW SUMMER PRIZES FOR XWORDS!

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues — XWORD 786

1. Certain kinds of boats are expected to make
3. One does not often expect view from one to be stately and impressive
6. Night-watchman should be this when burglars attempt forcible entry
8. You may be right to blame yourself should you come a cropper just because of this
10. Wild animals, as a rule, are not at all easy to
11. Naturally has influence on our British composers
13. An opportunist will study
14. Mr. Butler's budget is having effect on these

Down Clues

2. One may turn out really fine yarn at times
3. It's common to see these of cabbages in greengrocer's
4. Is usually identified by its colour
5. Assists one to bear almost any burden
7. The way that jet planes do this is most distinctive
9. You may occasionally see a field black with these
12. One sometimes runs over part of garden

£100 1st PRIZE CASH PLUS

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Up to 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES — one for each 2nd Runner-up

XWORD 781 RESULT

WINNING WORDS, ACROSS: 1, Tubes. 3, Cool. 5, Box. 6, Lives. 7, Rot. 10, Create. 11, Crops. 12, Alms. DOWN: 1, Teas. 2, Ballet. 3, Consuls. 4, Liner. 8, Spoor. 9, Dusk. 10, Cut.

FIVE £100 SHARERS: E. D. Beecroft, 75 The Grove, Wheatley Hills, Doncaster; I. James c/o 70 Sycamore Avenue, Newport, Mon; Miss E. Johnson, 75 The Grove, Wheatley Hills, Doncaster; F/Sgt. J. Mallen, 101 A.M.Q., R.A.F., Bassingbourn, Herts; E. M. Palmer, School House, Combe Hay, Nr. Bath.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared between 51 entrants. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

PRETEND YOU'RE A HERO

Continued from page 9

the rumble and grind of the oncoming locomotive.

Just as he ran out into the sunlight, he yelled back: "Don't forget your knife!" and beat it up the bank.

When he got to the top, he ran down the tracks ahead of the train, in the same direction, far enough ahead so that the man in the culvert could climb on to one of the middle wagons. Then he stopped, turned, and began to wave his arms at Mr. Colvin on the engine.

"Now look here, boy," Mr. Colvin said sternly. "What do you think you're up to? For me to stop and pick you up is one thing, but when you ask for it, in play-like, it's a horse of a different colour." But when he heard the news—when he learned how, at that very moment, the convict would be climbing on and hiding himself away in a coal-wagon or a box-wagon—Mr. Colvin got as excited as Don had been.

The train began to slow as it drew closer and closer to Arcadia, and Don began unaccountably to feel funny inside, almost sorry, though he knew it was silly of him, silly and ungrown-up. He tried to think of the news item in the paper, and his picture, maybe, and maybe even a medal from the Chamber of Commerce or the Rotary or the Boy Scouts; but somehow he wished it hadn't happened; he couldn't help thinking of that sad face back in the culvert—their culvert, now—the sad, lonely look that showed that the man didn't have a friend in the world; and he hoped that he wouldn't have to face the man at the station.

MR. COLVIN was out of the cab before Don was and rushing across the platform. Mr. Brink, the stationmaster, got on the phone at once. And in less than three minutes the police drove up with guns and handcuffs and cautiously started back along the train towards the guard's van, pounding on each sliding door and hollering: "Come on out of there, you, or we'll shoot!"

Don stayed in the station, where a small crowd had begun to gather. In the centre of the waiting-room was a pot-bellied stove, and Don studied it with great concentration.

Then the police came in, beaming from ear to ear, and in their midst, handcuffed, his mouth clamped so tight that the lips showed grey and his small eyes staring straight ahead in lonely hatred, was Don's friend of the culvert.

"Well, boy," Mr. Colvin said, "it's a great day for you, all right, all right," and the police official grinned at him and then at the others and said in a loud voice: "Guess I'll have to put Don on the force," and everybody laughed.

Helplessly, Don stole a glance at the prisoner, but the man didn't look at him at all; it was almost as though he was not surprised, expected nothing different, had never believed Don in the first place. Don looked hard at the driver, then, and tried to smile. If he kept his eyes on Mr. Colvin, he wouldn't have to look at anybody else; and at that moment he didn't feel like looking at the police any more than at the man in handcuffs.

Well, the thing to do was to try to pretend that it was all right. It was the first time in his life that he had ever played anybody a dirty trick; it was a break with all he had ever been or believed before, but the odd thing was that it seemed to be the right thing to do. Everybody thought it was great, and maybe, in time, he'd think so, too. Given a little more time, maybe he'd look at it differently, like the others; maybe he'd learn to feel happy about it, and not mind it, like the men were doing now. Anyhow, he tried to look happy and to feel happy, because it seemed the grown-up thing to do. After all, hadn't he caught a dangerous man, a convict—a menace to society? And at the thought of this, dim feelings of pride stirred in him, and he began to look forward to the papers.

THE END

EXAMPLE ..... 6d.

BULLET .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... 6d.

B. .....

EX. .....

B. .....

EX. .....

B. .....

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With this coupon (which you can enclose with your entry) send P.O. 1s. for six weeks' *Bulletin* and *Gazette* at REDUCED SERIES RATE—first copy dated May 31. **Every issue contains extra *Bullets* winners to guide you to success.**

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In adjudication all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated May 31.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

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5	■	6A	W	A	■	E	■	E	I	
O	A	R	■	■	■	A	M	E	N	
K	I	O	S	K	■	■	■	■	■	
E	R	N	E	■	M	S	■	7	■	
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■	■	A	L	■	■	10	E	A	R	
11	A	X	■	■	12	■	F	R	O	
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CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
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Puzzle and form strictly copyright **786** Closing Postmark MON., MAY 19

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SEAMUS DELARGY'S IRISH STORY

Continued from page 15

generation after generation of story-tellers, may take hours to tell. Of some stories the Folklore Commission may have as many as 400 versions. There are old hero tales of Cuchulain, and Finn MacCool, and Queen Maeve; tales of saints; tales of historical characters and animals; Irish versions of fairy stories known the world over, and stories set in recent times, too.

Humorous tales are numerous. There is the story of the old husband who, told that his young wife will probably marry after his death, dies of jealousy; of the fool who, riding to market, drops a cheese and, finding his sword too short to reach the cheese, rides on to market to buy a new sword; of the man who, annoyed by unruly jokers at the wake he is having for a dead relative, declares that it will be a long time before he will have another wake.

Perhaps the greatest of the story-tellers who remain is Peig Sayers, now eighty-one, blind and ill, living on the Kerry mainland instead of her home island, Great Blasket, but happy that her rich fund of ancient tales will now survive for posterity.

They Must Be Humoured

Typical of the collectors who work under Delargy is a cheery, red-faced Kerry ex-teacher, forty-seven year old Tim Murphy, of Waterville, who cycles along mountain sheeptracks with his recording unit distributed between his back carrier and his handlebars. Many a long night journey in the rain is wasted. Storytellers have peculiarities which must be humoured.

Walt Disney went to Ireland three years ago, planning to make a film starring a leprechaun, and consulted Professor Delargy. On the professor's advice, Disney went down to County Kerry to see veteran *seanachai* Liam Stack, who welcomed the party into his lime-washed farmhouse. Introduced to Stack's sister, Disney said: "Ma'am, I come from a place called Los Angeles. I reckon it's about 6,000 miles from here."

"Los Angeles," said the old woman. "Sure I had a brother there, and he was killed in a subway accident."

Shaken, Disney turned to Liam and asked: "Say, tell me, did you ever see a leprechaun?"

"Well," said Liam, pushing back his old slouch hat and slowly massaging his greying locks. "No, I never saw a leprechaun." The bushy moustache hid his smile as he added: "But —I saw their tracks!"

Disney has not yet made the film.

The "Penicillin" Custom

Stories are only a part of the folklore collector's booty. Customs and beliefs are just as important. One ancient custom was shown to have a scientific foundation when Sir Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin, extracting it from the kind of moulds that grow on food. When one of Sir Alexander's collaborators wrote to the Folklore Commission making an inquiry, they were able to tell him that for centuries Irish peasants have kept pieces of mouldy bread or bacon to rub into wounds.

An important part of the Folklore Commission's work is tracing the relationship of stories and customs of Ireland to those of other lands. Irish fishermen dedicate their boats and curraghs to "God and Columcille"—an Irish saint. Delargy tells them that the same custom flourished until recently in Iceland, where Christianity was introduced by Irish monks; the first church in Iceland was dedicated to "God and Columcille."

Comparisons like this are part of the long task of which Delargy says: "We will not live to see the finished picture. It may not be possible to produce it for centuries to come. But unless the million and one pieces are collected now, it can never be done." THE END

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

The photograph on page 27 is of Denis Compton when a boy.

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Custard Flip with Strawberries

½-pint Bird's Custard
Strawberries
1 packet Bird's Lemon Jelly-de-Luxe

Make up custard following directions on tin, using 1 level tablespoon of sugar. Make up jelly using only *half-pint* of water. When both are quite cold but not set, stir the jelly gradually into the smooth, creamy custard and leave until it is almost set. Then whisk well. Leave until quite set and whisk once more. Leave again until firm. Pile into glasses, wreathe with strawberries and mint leaves, and serve proudly.

Strawberry Fiesta Sundae

1 pint extra-thick Bird's Custard
A few or many Strawberries

Put some cool, extra-thick Bird's Custard into 4 sundae glasses and leave to set. Arrange strawberries over it. Top with another layer of extra-thick custard and decorate with as many strawberries as you have. Then taste it . . . mm! only *Bird's* Custard could make it *that* good.

Even strawberries are better with Bird's Custard!